Exhibit 5

EQUITY BASED
ORGANIZATIONAL
ASSESSMENT
FOR OREGON DEQ

SPRING 2023

ENGAGE TO
CHANGE, LLC

A NEW PATH
FOWARD

Executive Summary

This organizational assessment is a living document, designed to provide insight, analysis, and recommendations to support DEQ in alignment of its mission and goals with its commitment to racial and social justice. This document is informed by the history and experiences of those within DEQ who are most impacted by racism, sexism, and other forms of oppression. The goal and intent of this document is to provide framework and tools to help DEQ develop anti-racist practices, embed racial justice in its operations, and to do so with a deep focus on authenticity, interconnection, curiosity, creativity, and the cultivation of transformational, generative change.

In order to get the most out of this document, an approach based on curiosity and honest self-reflection is required. This includes an awareness of your positionality, institutional power, and the impacts of racism. It is recommended that people who engage with this document take a slower, bite-sized approach to its consumption, which will aid in fully understanding the material and processing emotions, while also taking time for self-care and restoration. Organizational assessments are designed to provide transparency and clarity, and to highlight areas of strength, areas of weakness, and areas for growth and improvement. Yet, an organizational assessment of this nature is just one of several tools to be used in achieving the alignment of DEQ's mission and goals with its racial and social justice commitments. Several tools will be introduced to aid in your engagement with this document, including guidance on goals, strategy and vision; leadership and leadership development; accountability; alliances and partnerships; and organizational culture. The document also includes a chart on the *Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist Multicultural Organization* which can assist in charting the path forward from the present.

In addition, in order to get the most out of this Organizational Assessment, you must engage in healthy practices for receiving and giving feedback. Several areas must be addressed in order to receive the feedback in this document in a way that is well-rounded and productive. These include the following: ground/center yourself; tune into your body; be aware of typical ways of responding (fight, flight, freeze, dawn, focus); feedback is a gift; pay attention to power dynamics; focus on content-not tone or manner; listen to understand (not to hold onto your worldview); thank the person; and ask What's Next? With respect to giving feedback, it is most effective when the following areas are considered: center and grounding; asking yourself Why?; give feedback for and to the situation-not the person; and do your prep work.

Before delving further, there are a few important initial considerations for this Organizational Assessment. First, there are varying perspectives from individuals within DEQ about their hopes for this Organizational Assessment. However, the goal of ETC is that this assessment provides ongoing resources and guidance to DEQ to support innovative thought, new perspectives, and bravery in addressing past harms and healing. Critiques of this assessment are also expected and will further highlight areas for exploration. In addition, DEQ should resist its historic reliance on quantitative data to support the

information and recommendations set forth in this assessment, particularly in light of how many observations do not appear directly connected to quantitative data for good reason. In some instances quantification is difficult or nearly impossible, in other instances anonymity requires quantitative data to be withheld, and in yet other instances, quantification is not required to justify action.

Second, as part of the assessment process, DEQ leadership and DEQ union representatives were engaged and during that process, tension and conflict were apparent. While healthy conflict is encouraged, the relationship dynamic between the two groups at times interfered with the anti-racism and equity principles being employed by ETC. Although an in-depth exploration of this conflict is beyond the scope of this assessment, it is quite possible that unresolved issues may arise between the Collective Bargaining Agreement and the Organizational Assessment. Furthermore, due to the history of DEQ's lack of efforts and engagement in anti-racism and equity work, the CBA will be insufficient on its own to move DEQ to become a more equitable organization. The Organizational Assessment is intended to serve as a new tool for DEQ in this regard.

Third, the Vehicle Inspection Program was identified as an outlier as compared to other services, programs and departments within DEQ. VIP is one of the more public facing programs within DEQ and it also operates as an isolated, siloed entity. This made it difficult for ETC to acquire feedback and data on VIP employees' experiences. Regardless, the themes and recommendations in this assessment appear to be prevalent throughout VIP and in order for DEQ to ensure organization-wide commitment to anti-racism, anti-oppression, and equity work, intentional collaboration and communication between VIP and the rest of the agency is necessary. Fourth, and most importantly, ETC's approach that includes leading with racism was questioned regularly. Leading with racism is required in this work because without an intentional focus on racism, it is easily overlooked and the full spectrum of oppression cannot be understood without its inclusion.

DEQ's anti-racism, anti-oppression, and equity work is fairly new to the organization. While DEQ or folks within the organization may have begun DEI work prior to 2007, this organizational assessment begins its review of DEQ's history of DEI efforts starting with the 2007 Assessment. The 2007 Assessment focused on organizational development and strategic thinking, identifying major issues in the following areas: emotional safety, communication, and boundaries. In 2019, an Affirmative Action Plan was developed as a follow up to the Governor's affirmative action plan. As part of this effort, DEQ reviewed its employment statistics in an effort to eliminate institutional and structural barriers to employment at DEQ. The statistics showed that its hiring outcomes fared well for women, veterans, and people with different abilities, but that people of color did not. As a result, the 2019 Affirmative Action Plan was created which included a variety of directives and identified several roles within the organization who were responsible to implement a number of methods designed to increase hiring, retention, and promotion of employees from underrepresented communities. In 2020, DEQ created its DEI committee and several other groups were formed specific to marginalized identities, with limited effectiveness in

addressing issues at DEQ. In 2022, ETC was contracted to collaborate with DEQ on the development of a strategic plan and this organizational assessment is part of that work.

The methodology underlying ETC's approach is based in empowerment and engagement of communities, with a focus on validation of experiences, responding to needs, and honoring knowledge. The following values are uplifted and centered in this work: Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity, Responsibility, Relationship, and Representation. With that in mind, evaluations of this nature are inherently limited by an ever-shifting work environment, leadership transitions, and significant environment and societal issues that rise to widespread urgency and action. Data collection included review of a number of historic documents provided by DEQ, as well as new information which was acquired and assessed with instruction and training in an effort to support understanding and integration. From the data collected, observational analysis was utilized to identify main themes that have contributed to the disconnect between DEQ's mission and its commitment to racial and social justice: lack of transparency and accountability; perfectionism; defensiveness; lack of support for BIPOC employees; and isolation. These main themes underlie the analysis and recommendations set forth in this document.

The role of power is integral to the examination of forms of oppression. Two sources of power are exercised within DEQ: 1) power related to job title and function and 2) power related to the individual components of identity. While power related to job title and function can predictably be held and wielded through the organizational hierarchy, a deeper understanding of the ways in which power related to identity also contributes to oppressive systems is necessary. Positionality is the way in which our identity influences and biases our worldview and an understanding of our own positionality and the positionality of others is crucial to understanding the intersections of power at DEQ. Several questions for reflection and examples are set forth in this section to help you dissect and explore how power is accessed and wielded and its impact at DEQ.

Effective equity efforts require visibility in order to build trust with those who have historically been harmed and to raise confidence that real change is being implemented. Transparency requires open communication and honesty, and it is the responsibility of not only individuals within the organization, but the organization itself. This includes transparency around decision making, policies, and accountability. Lack of transparency can result in distrust, inaccuracy, uncertainty, and damage to relationships, and this can be especially problematic when parts of an organization become siloed. While siloing is expected in an organization of DEQ's size and breadth, DEQ must also take action to ensure that siloing doesn't lead to inconsistency, frustration of creativity, or echo chambers. As DEQ's anti-racism, anti-oppression and equity work grows and spreads throughout the organization, it is imperative to engage multidisciplinary teams from all levels of the organization that are committed and capable of high-level anti-racist, anti-oppression, and equity practice to ensure greater internal visibility of the work. Several examples that demonstrate the presence and cause of distrust within DEQ are provided within this section.

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Accountability falls on a spectrum and can exist before, during, or after harm occurs. While accountability can be a consequence or punitive, it is also proactive and responsive. Understanding accountability requires that we take inventory and action of the world in which we want to live, collaboratively and in relationship with those in the community. Accountability has both individual and collective components and this assessment is intended as an initial tool to aid DEQ in its determination of accountability as it relates to DEQ's DEI work. Proactive accountability requires an understanding of history and impact within the communities with whom DEQ engages, as well as an assumption of responsibility that centers the community's needs over the individual's emotions, supplanting defensiveness with empathy. Continuous, ongoing education, "learning out loud/showing your work," consideration of consequence, and ongoing reflection and course correction are all necessary parts of proactive and healthy accountability. This section includes a number of questions for reflection and examples to further explore accountability.

Environmental justice and racial justice are inextricably linked and any organization whose responsibility is to maintain and foster a sustainably healthy environment for the entire community must understand the connection. While visibility and shared visioning is integral to environmental justice, the history of DEQ's creation and charge may be partially responsible for the lack of visibility of DEQ's work in this regard. DEQ may also have unanswered questions about its own relationship to environmental justice work and the interconnection with racial justice. For DEQ's environmental justice work to be more visible and sustainable, and to provide more support to people of color working in this area, attention and resources are required.

People who have not experienced racism or other forms of oppression within DEQ may be resistant to anti-oppression, anti-racism, and equity work. A recognition of the varied experiences of different people within the same environment is key to addressing this type of resistance. In addition to the organizational impact of resistance, it can also cause a personal impact in the form of "invisible labor," which is predominately experienced by those who have been marginalized and also receive the bulk of the pushback on equity initiatives. Resistance can come from those seeking to maintain the status quo and also from those who are fighting for equity. It is important that an act of resistance is analyzed to determine whether it is detrimental to or, in contrast, support of DEQ's mission and values in order to align a response to resistance that is consistent with racial and social justice. A number of questions for reflection and examples are provided in this section to further explore how resistance can show up and its impact. While resistance may be inevitable and resource-consuming, culture change can help reduce and eliminate resistance over time.

Solidarity is key to dismantling oppression and requires the investment of both those who hold power with respect to organizational norms and those who do not culturally or naturally subscribe to those same norms. In DEQ, organizational norms are directly tied to "whiteness," which uses white culture, customs, and beliefs as the standard by which all other groups are judged or compared. While the term "whiteness" may evoke an uncomfortable response for some, the idea of "whiteness" is not singularly perpetuated by

white people. Rather, any person, white or a person of color, can subscribe to standards generated from whiteness and any person, white or a person of color, can reject whiteness as the standard applicable to all. The fifteen characteristics of "whiteness" and their counter approaches include: perfectionism vs. mistakes are opportunities to learn; sense of urgency vs. thoughtful timing; defensiveness vs. self-reflection; valuing quantity over quality vs. value statements; worshiping the written word vs. valuing other skills and contributions; believing in only one right way vs. challenging the assumption of omniscience; paternalism vs. impacted people; either/or thinking vs. both/and thinking; power hoarding vs. openness to change; fear of open conflict vs. inviting countering opinions; individualism vs. sharing credit; believing I'm the only one vs. ability to delegate; believing progress means bigger or more vs. considering how we want to work; only including objectivity vs. including emotions and other forms of expression; and claiming a right to comfort vs. welcoming discomfort and growth. Solidarity requires an understanding of "whiteness" as well as an understanding of the impacts of "scarcity" on different groups within the marginalized community as a whole, which can be used to pit one group against another. To be effective, anti-racism efforts must move towards collectivism, be well-resourced, and recognize "Anti-Blackness" as a form of racism that specifically targets and dehumanizes Black people, culture, and institutions as means to further exploit, oppress, and divide movements based in solidarity.

A microaggression is a comment or action that demonstrates a prejudice, discriminatory or racial attitude or idea towards a marginalized group. Microaggressions may be subtle or overt, subconscious or with intent. While microaggressions may be commonplace, they can be particularly harmful when they are frequent and committed by the same person. Tokenism is a form of microaggressions that involves a performative effort to include a member of a marginalized group to create a false impression of equitable practices. The impact of and appropriate response to microaggressions are informed by the frequency, power dynamics, patterns and practice, and intentionality of the conduct. Frequent, unaddressed, and unaccounted for microaggressions can create harms such as burnout, feelings of exclusion, disconnection, and can erode trust and security. In addressing microaggressions and minimizing harm, DEQ should focus on education, expectations, and a response model that centers the harmed person and provides support.

Human Resources practices often require brave and courageous rethinking. Human resource departments are often set up to help organizations comply with federal and state laws as well as organizational policies and practices. If those laws, policies and practices are created without anti-racism, anti-oppression and equity principles in mind, human resources may end up protecting a workplace environment that is in the middle of shifting.

The end of this document provides recommendations to support DEQ in its ongoing efforts towards becoming an organization whose values and mission align with its racial and social equity commitments. While this list is comprehensive, it is not exhaustive. These recommendations should be considered collaboratively, in community, and with an understanding of the roles of power, possibility, and the transformation that culture change can provide to support all people within our community.

Introduction

Long before COVID-19 and the 2020 Black-led uprisings against ongoing police violence, people of color have been affected by and working to address forces of structural racism, settler colonialism, nationalism, and other intersecting forms of oppression that particularly impact Black and Indigenous people and other communities of color. Health and economic disparities and the interrelated effects they have on the environments we share are dramatic and widespread, from the interpersonal level to the institutional level. What does it mean to be public servants committed to racial and social justice in this time? How can DEQ align its mission and goals as an environmental agency with the needs of all of the community?

In recent years, folks inside Oregon's Department of Environmental Quality have begun to recognize and name that the culture and practices must align with its vision for a just and equitable community—that the ways government employees work to advance racial equity matter as much as the outcomes they seek and the policies they craft.

Doing anti-racism work within government requires us to recognize the undeniable reality of our interdependence, collective health, creativity, and drive to belong. Designed as a capacity-building learning experience for Oregon DEQ, this document offers not just information and reflection on where DEQ is in their institutional anti-racism journey but also frameworks and tools to help DEQ develop anti-racist practices and embed racial justice in DEQ operations.

ETC uses terms like equity, anti-racism & anti-oppression (sometimes interchangeably). Check the glossary for definitions, but a good place to start your own work (or in your teams) is trying to come to a healthy understanding of the difference <u>and</u> similarities of these terms.

The recommendations contained in this living document use a living-systems approach that has been used by many cultures around the world for thousands of years; it focuses on caring for the Earth, emphasizes the importance of relationships, and will help the agency move towards greater understanding, interconnection, and alignment toward transformational, anti-racist practices and outcomes. Not only do all workers benefit from a workplace that centers care for relationships and living systems, but the work of racial equity and social justice is also inherently relational, creative, and generative. It requires us to shape a thriving future together, in the unfolding present.

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This document, the voices and experiences it is informed by (led by employees most impacted by racism, sexism, and other intersecting forms of oppression) and its application should be used as living and changing medium; it evolved in response to a need to deepen the anti-racist organizing capacity building of folks across departments, divisions, and the state.

At a time when communities around the country are grappling with powerful social, political, and historical forces, anti-racism organizational change offers unique and timely insight into effective ways to cultivate transformational change. This organizational assessment is an invitation to tend to the contours of authenticity, the rhythms of resilience, the constellation of connections within and between people, teams, organizations, systems, and communities.

Acknowledgements

The ETC team acknowledges and appreciates those contemporaneously leading equity and anti-oppression work within themselves, families, communities, and organizations. We are humbled to be a part of a larger ecosystem of human beings that continue to envision a world that has more room for love, compassion and justice for one another. We are incredibly grateful for our connection and learning from those who have led the exploration of scholarship, art, music, education, truthfulness, companionship, and healing with a core focus on human and civil rights and recognition. We also appreciate the DEQ community for including ETC in its efforts to be a more equitable and just organization.

Authors

This organizational assessment is a significant undertaking for DEQ and multiple members of the ETC team worked diligently to provide the most accurate and meaningful snapshot of DEQ's current climate. The following ETC team members all helped shape the content of this report, the analysis within, and/or the preparation for this assessment's dissemination:

Robin Eisenbach (she, her)	Hugo Gonzalez Venegas (he, him, el)
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ETC Information

Background

Engage to Change (ETC) was founded in 2017 and is a Black-owned and queer woman-owned collective that centers voices of color, draws strength from indigenous wisdom and uplifts the lived experiences of BIPOC folks. The ETC team has a lifetime of experience working in governmental, not-for-profit/community service, legal, and educational settings. ETC does equity and anti-racism work by rejecting scarcity thinking and instead focusing on the strength, courage and perseverance of those with marginalized identities.

Engage to Change was formed organically through the friendship and connection of its founders, Kasia Rutledge and Rakeem Washington. When their individual journeys intersected they found themselves at a place in which sharing, with vulnerability and transparency, the inner-parts of their anti-racism efforts could be helpful in highlighting pathways forward for others. At its core, ETC began as a place to offer togetherness, truthfulness, and healing for those experiencing oppression throughout parts of their

identities.   Today, it continues to try and create room for that same growth through anti-racism workshops, strategic planning, organizational change, and consultation and facilitation work.

Philosophy

Engage to Change passionately believes in the power of whole systems thinking and the importance of cultivating the voices and lived experiences of those most directly impacted by inequities. We use a combination of learning styles, workshop formats, and participant engagement in order to get buy-in, build accountability, and ensure progress from the people and groups that we will connect with. We are always intersectional, trauma-informed, and use the most recent innovative and time-tested and demonstrated effective methods in our work. Throughout all of our anti-racism/anti-oppression work and education, we build connections to highlight the ways in which multiple systems interact. Our approach to anti-racist/anti-oppression training, coaching, and facilitation as well as systems development (and re-development) goes beyond a singular attempt to treat the symptoms of white supremacy and other forms of oppression within a partner organization; and includes holistic efforts to identify root causes, prevent, diagnose, and heal the deleterious impacts of racism and oppression.

ETC's Transformational, Anti-Racist Organizing Approach

1. Supports anti-racism as a lived and life-affirming practice that centers interconnection, collective health and wellbeing, healing, and relationships.

2. Shifts from knowing what is true to feeling what is true and letting that shape our knowledge, including through the integration of arts, culture, mindfulness, and embodiment.

3. Integrates all four levels of racism (internalized, interpersonal, institutional, and structural), the awareness that white supremacy disembodies and disconnects us, and practices at the self, team, department, institutional, and structural levels that promote embodiment and connection.

ETC's projects use culture and embodied practices to support strategic racial equity work across departments, business lines, and issue areas, in relationship with communities most affected by structural racism. ETC applies creative modalities and approaches racial equity work holistically, breaking down silos and transforming institutional culture through transformational, anti-racist experiences,

As Dr. Raúl Quiñones Rosado explains, "…Any integrated approach to integral change requires processes that are simultaneously individual and collective, subjective and objective. These approaches would need to foster the emergence of ever-higher

developmental stages along multiple lines in all aspects of being and human activity while also actively challenging current manifestations of institutional and internalized oppression. The creation of actual integral change approaches to individual and collective well-being that is simultaneously liberatory and transformative presents a formidable challenge." [1]

ETC builds on the work of Paolo Freire[2] —and other activists, practitioners, and scholars—which explains that the struggle for liberation must be led by oppressed people to reclaim their humanity.

How we make change is an essential element of getting to the change we are trying to make. This work recognizes that building racial equity is a creative and relational process that requires work within individuals and teams, as well as on organizational culture, practices, and policies, to support institutional and structural change.

Healthy Conflict- Receiving and Giving Feedback

Receiving Feedback

Part of the reason that anti-racism work must be done in community and in relationships with other folks is that we often cannot see when we have reached an edge of our learning. There are things about ourselves (and certainly the world) that we cannot access or understand without being in relationship with others who are willing to share with us their observations about how we are showing up.

One unhealthy way of being is to avoid, fear, reject, or explain away these interactions. Current thinking about equity and anti-racism means that to be "good" is to not make mistakes and to avoid talking about racism. However uncomfortable (or comfortable in unhealthy patterns) these conversations are, it is one key area that we can grow in. In situations around racism, inequities, oppression, it is often NOT the first mistake that is the most harmful/painful/unhealthy for folks of color- it is OFTEN our response to when we are told about them that causes the most pain. And it is the area that we can have the most control over with practice and intentionality.

We put this section near the top of the Organizational Assessment because fundamentally this entire assessment is feedback. As you engage with it, you are likely to find yourself running the gamut of emotions and feelings. We are suggesting and offering a new way to approach this document and the subsequent conversations and efforts around making DEQ

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[1] (*Consciousness in Action: Toward an Integral Psychology of Liberation and Transformation, 2000*)

[2] *Pedagogy of the Oppressed, 1978*

a more anti-racist/equitable organization that is healthier for all employees and better able to meet the needs of all of Oregon's environmental and human needs. How you engage with yourself as you read this document will have as much of an impact on what you see in it, how it feels to you and what you get out of it, as the words on the paper. Although on paper, this is still a conversation, an exchange. You are a key part in making this accessible, successful and transformative.

Receiving Feedback is most effective when the following areas are addressed:

1. Ground/Center yourself
2. Tune into your body
3. Be aware of typical ways of responding (fight, flight, freeze, fawn, focus)
4. Feedback is a gift
5. Pay attention to power dynamics
6. Focus on content- not tone or manner
7. Listen to understand (not to hold on to your worldview)
8. Thank the person
9. What next?

Further discussion on these areas is set forth below:

1. Ground/Center yourself.

Sometimes we are given a heads up that someone has feedback to give us. Sometimes it is unexpectedly given. If you know ahead of time that you are going to receive feedback, you can take some time to center and ground yourself. This can be whatever works for you (and learning how to center and ground yourself is worth the investment!)

Centering and grounding is anything that helps you to be calm and aware of yourself and your emotions and able to act from a connected, regulated state. This can be deep breaths in and out. It can be placing your feet on the ground and being still. It can be journaling or being in nature or meditating or taking a relaxing shower. It could be singing a song, petting a cute cat or really anything that helps your body and mind be in the present moment, open and connected.

Grounding and centering is not also something that happens once. When we are surprised by feedback or stressors it can be helpful to take a moment to ground again. With practice, you can ground in an instant and while still in connection with others. If you receive

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feedback and don't have notice and an opportunity to ground beforehand- you can create some space to do it in the moment. Take a deep breath in and out. Ask for a moment to go to the bathroom and center there. Touch any part of your body that helps you feel connected. Repeat a few times to yourself a mantra that helps you stay present. Brené Brown's mantra is "I am here to get it right- not to BE right." Do this as many times as is necessary to be present and still and open and connected to yourself.

2. **Tune into your body.**

Building a practice of noticing how and when your body has wisdom that your brain does not is an important part of embodying anti-racism practice. Knowing when we are dysregulated or struggling with emotions or acting from a place of hurt or trauma can help us to be more accountable and grounded in our relationships with others. Healing ourselves (and knowing how that shows up in our bodies) is key to being healthy together.

This looks like cultivating a practice of developing and deepening our emotional intelligence and granularity. It also looks like paying attention to when and how we respond when things activate or grab us. Some of the common responses when we are in this dysregulated or activated state are often known as fight, flight, freeze, fawn, or focus.

TOOLS FOR HEALTHY CONFLICT– IN THE MOMENT

Internal Systems

Fight/Flight/Freeze/Fawn/ Focus - how show up in words, actions, body.

Name what you are feeling with as much emotional granularity as you can

Relationship

Be curious about your ladder of inference AND theirs.

Ask questions for understanding and repeat back for clarity.

Power

Pay attention to how power is working.

Focus on impact not intent

-Pause-

Seeing Through

Pay attention to activation and invizibil(ized) labor

Connect with body and somatic tools

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3. **Be aware of typical ways of responding (fight, flight, freeze, fawn, focus).**

Once we are dysregulated, or tagged, or activated, we tend to move into modes of "self-protection" that served us in other situations when we didn't have as much control and regulation over ourselves. Our brain registers that fear and activating in the same place regardless of if we are in actual danger or just in unfamiliar, uncomfortable, and startling spaces. Part of the work we have to do around our responses to feedback is to be aware of and more in control of how we choose to respond.

The goal is to keep practicing this awareness over and over again so that you become more able to recognize earlier on when and how you are being tagged. Sometimes we aren't able to recognize that we have reacted out of a place of fear or scarcity or urgency or in ways that are disproportionate to the current situation until much later (sometimes we never see it). Sometimes it is only when old familiar patterns of coping show up that we are able to know that we have gone down a path that is leading us unconsciously and unnecessarily towards unhelpful and unhealthy responses. This practice of knowing how we respond when tagged can help us to recognize and head off our typical tendencies to off ramp.

Off-Ramping

Unfamiliarity
Relying on ignorance to avoid action or conversation.

Feigned Shock
Falsifying solidarity by drumming up outrage without true action.

Fragility/Defensiveness
Immediately reacting with anger or tears or strong emotions

Other Identities
As a woman... What about folks with disabilities?

Distance
Removing oneself from the conversation or required action.

Obstinance
Outright refusal to participate.

Silence
Staying put but staying silent- shutting down

Pushback/Opposition
Muddying the conversation through argument or disagreement.

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4. Feedback is a gift.

When receiving the feedback, stop to consider that courage and summon up empathy and curiosity. Be appreciative and acknowledging of the difficulty of giving it.

Consider what it has taken, the energy and courage of the person or group who is giving you meaningful feedback. It may be a peer review in performance review cycles. It may be a good friend who you've inadvertently offended. It may be a partner who you've tuned out because this feedback is so recurring. It may be someone on your team who wants a better working environment. In all cases, this person deeply values something about the relationship or your action has deeply touched something emotional within them. Acknowledge the courage and integrity that has sparked this person to take the active choice to give you feedback.

5. Pay attention to power dynamics.

Pay extra and special attention and give acknowledgement if the person is in a lower power relationship to yourself, whether that relationship is imbalanced by its very nature (e.g. manager/direct report) or if the person is someone who holds less societal and structural power than you. This could be a person of color, a queer person, a person with disabilities, a person in a different job classification than you, and/or a newer hire.

6. Pay attention to content- not tone or manner.

Many of us have been directly or indirectly trained in respectability politics. That is, that there is a "right" and "professional" way to give feedback and so we carefully consider how we say things and how we respond when we are given feedback. We watch things like our tone, the expressions on our face, our body language, and whether we let any of our emotions show. These are often racialized and gendered constructs. Folks of color under this system have to contort their feedback into the ways that white folks are going to be most comfortable receiving it. Women and those socialized in femininity (particularly white femininity) have to be aware of appearing "too emotional" and women and gender expansive folks of color have to be aware of being "too aggressive."

> "Tone policing is a tactic used by those who have privilege to silence those who do not by focusing on the tone of what is being said rather than the action content..." Layla Saad from Me and White Supremacy

Fighting these biases and standard operating procedures in ours as we give and receive feedback is possible. When receiving feedback, notice the ways in which internally you are focusing on the tone or manner of the person giving you feedback. If you notice that you are "tone policing" thank yourself for noticing and then

tell yourself something like "the giver of feedback is expressing their perspective in the way that's they are best able to" and focus on what they are telling you- not how they are telling you.

7. Listen to understand (not hold on to your current worldview).

It is hard to receive critical feedback. It's natural and very human for us to get defensive, to feel that we're being attacked for an honest mistake, or even worse that we're being called a racist. Feedback about how we are showing up in regards to racism can feel like an attack because we don't want to be causing harm. Our defensive or fragile reactions are ways that make it easier for us to disregard what we are hearing about how someone experienced us. AND they make it much harder to actually hear what someone is saying.

When you receive feedback and notice you are responding to the feels of it, try this. Try to learn into curiosity and openness. Truly listen to what the other person is saying. If you ask questions, have them be from a place of curiosity so that you can better understand the feedback and context. Notice when you are feeling the need to justify or explain or hold tight to your current worldview. Trust that the other person knows you have good intentions and is putting themselves on the line to give you this feedback.

Listen, receive, don't explain yourself, do ask questions for clarification. Give yourself and them space (like 24 hours or more) to reflect and soak in and process.

This goes both for critical and also complementary feedback. Often when we hear things that are positive about us, we tend to brush over and dismiss them. Instead of leaning into those feels of discomfort- take them to heart as well. Hear them fully without dismissing or minimizing them.

8. Give thanks.

Feedback is a gift. It helps us be in better, healthier relationships. It is an investment in you and the relationship that someone cares enough to share. It is hard to give and receive. We learn a lot about the person giving feedback even as we receive it. Honor that gift and investment.

We honor it by fully listening to it, by noticing our attempts to run away from it and choosing to be centered in it. We honor it by telling the person we appreciate their courage and what they have told us. We honor it by continuing to think about, process, and perhaps act on what they have shared. Tell them thank you.

9. What next?

As feedback is a gift, you get to decide what to do with it next. Rushing to a solution or fixing it or making it feel better isn't always the right move. Sit with it. Find people you trust

that can hold you accountable and with love and grace to process it if appropriate. Try to reframe what you heard from the person to make sure you understand. Notice again where feelings and distractions are coming up for you.

You don't always have to act on the feedback. Growth will come from taking the time to process, and actively choosing what you're going to do. If you trust the feedback giver and the relationship, or if it happens to come from your boss, you'll likely have to get back to them and let them know what you're doing with the feedback. Remember, that it's ultimately your choice how to respond. Be honored that you have that opportunity to grow and reflect.

When you get another opportunity to receive feedback (or give it) access your learnings and curiosities about this time. Use it to incorporate and try something new. Rinse and Repeat these steps. Each chance to learn more about ourselves and to strengthen our relationships around anti-racism and equity makes us all healthier.

TOOLS FOR HEALTHY CONFLICT– IN BETWEEN

Muscle Memory

Build capacity and resilience with practice

Folks of Color- build trust of your intuition

Accountability

Find partners who support you by telling you the truth

Practice personal, interpersonal & group accountability

Discomfort

White folks- learn when you are centering white comfort and expand capacity for discomfort

Folks of Color- protect your peace

Rest

Take breaks, recommit, enlist folks with more capacity/power/resources

Practice self-kindness

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Unhealthy Patterns When Receiving Feedback			
Feelings	**Behaviors**	**Claims**	**Functions to:**
Singled Out Attacked Silenced Shamed Guilty Accused Insulted Judged Angry Scared Outraged	Crying Leaving Withdrawing Arguing Denying Focusing on intentions Seek absolution Avoiding	• I know POC • I marched in the '60s • The real oppression is class • You are judging me • You don't know me • That is just your opinion • How dare you assume I would be racist? • You don't do this the right way • You're playing the race card • This is not welcoming to me • If I say the wrong thing I'll get fired • You are making me feel guilty You are elitist • Some people just find offense where there is none • You hurt my feelings • You misunderstood me • Where is your empathy? • I don't feel safe The problem is your tone • I was taught to treat everyone equally	• Maintains white solidarity Closes off self-reflection Minimizes Silences the discussion Makes white people the victims • Hijacks the discussion Protects one's worldview Takes race off the table Protects white privilege Focuses on messenger, not message • Rallies more resources to white people Protects racism
Underlying Beliefs: • Racism is simply personal prejudice • Racism is only enacted occasionally, and rarely if ever by me			

- As a white person, I will be the judge of whether racism has occurred
- My learning is finished / I know all I need to know
- Racism can only be intentional; not having intended racism cancels it out
- Having suffered relieves me of racism or racial privilege
- White people who experience another form of oppression cannot experience racial privilege If I am a good person I can't be racist
- My unexamined perspective is equal to people of color's
- I am entitled to remain comfortable How I am perceived by others is the most important issue
- As a white person I know the best way to challenge racism
- This process needs to feel good / be comfortable. If not, it's being done wrong
- It's not kind to point out racism Race privilege is something one is aware of and can feel
- Racism is conscious bias. I have none.
- I am not racist- Racists are bad individuals, so you are saying that I am a bad person
- If you knew me or understood me you'd know I can't be racist
- If I have friends of color I can't be racist There is no problem / society is fine the way it is
- Racism is a simple problem ("People just need to ...")
- My world view is objective and the only one operating
- If I can't see it, it isn't legitimate
- If you have more knowledge on the subject than I do, you think you're better than me
- Judging is wrong; it is possible not to judge
- I am superior

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Healthier Patterns When Receiving Feedback			
Feelings	**Behaviors**	**Claims**	**Functions to:**
Gratitude Excitement Discomfort Guilt Embarrassment Motivation Humility Compassion Curiosity	Reflecting Apology Listening Processing Seeking more understanding Grappling Believing	• Thank you YES! I am opening and shifting • It's my responsibility to resist defensiveness and complacency • Man, this is hard • Wow, hard but so important • I better get on this • Oops! • It's personal but not about me. • There is no right way to do it; • I will focus on the message not the messenger • I need to build my capacity to endure discomfort / bear witness to the pain of racism • I have some work to do	• Minimizes defensiveness Demonstrates vulnerability Demonstrates curiosity and humility • Allows for growth • Stretches one's worldview Ensures action • Puts what one professes into practice • Builds authentic relationships / trust • Interrupts privilege-protecting comfort Interrupts internalized superiority • Interrupts racism
Underlying Beliefs: • Being good or bad is not relevant • Racism is a multi-layered system • All of us are socialized into it			

- Racism cannot be avoided
- White folks have gaps in understanding on racism / I have gaps in understanding on racism / it's hard to see or recognize Racism is complex / I don't have to understand it for it to be valid
- White folks are unconsciously invested in racism / I am unconsciously invested in racism
- Bias is implicit / unconscious; I don't expect to be aware of mine without a lot of on-going effort
- Receiving feedback is a gift
- Feedback from BIPOC folks indicates trust
- Feedback on white racism is difficult to give; how I receive feedback is not as relevant as the feedback itself
- Authentic anti-racism is rarely comfortable.
- Discomfort is key to my growth and thus desirable
- White comfort maintains the racial status quo, so discomfort is necessary and important
- I must not confuse comfort with safety / As a white person I am safe in discussions of racism
- The antidote to guilt is action
- It takes courage to break with white solidarity It takes courage to lead other whites in this work; how can I support those that do?
- The only way out is through I bring my group's history with me; History matters Given my socialization, it is much more likely that I am the one who doesn't understand the issue
- Racism hurts (even kills) people of color 24/7.
- Interrupting it is more important than my feelings, ego, or self-image

Giving Feedback

Giving Feedback is most effective when the following areas are considered:

1. Center and ground
2. Ask yourself why
3. Give feedback for and to the situation- not the person
4. Prep work

Further discussion on these considerations is set forth below:

1. Center and ground.

When we're not grounded, when we're not clear on what our intentions are, when we haven't taken the time to regulate ourselves first, then we're likely to give feedback from a reactionary, uncentered and/or fear/anger or control based place. When we give feedback that way, the folks we are giving feedback to will certainly pick up on our tone and energy.

The words we speak may be on point, but if our energy sends out the "I gotcha" message or the "I don't know if I have the right to do this," then that becomes the messages others may hear.

So when your heart is pounding, your mind is racing and you're feeling your muscles tighten, you must ground yourself before you speak. If not, you'll be reacting to your hot buttons and grabs and activations and NOT to the situation – and most likely, your feedback may not be received as constructive.

As when receiving feedback, centering, grounding, breathing, taking space before you offer the feedback to make sure you are doing it from a place rooted in love and accountability and not from pain is the first step. See the above section on "Ground/Center yourself" for these tips.

2. Ask yourself why.

It is important to have clarity for yourself on the reason for the feedback. Asking yourself "It is for the sake of what that I want to give this feedback to this person" or "why do I feel the need to share this with them?" and then being honest with yourself can really help you to focus on what you are sharing and why. If, for example, you ask yourself why you are sharing this, and the answer that comes back to you is "I am still angry about something this

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person said to me last week" then you are now in a better position to decide how you want to proceed.

It can also be very important and powerful to share the "It is for the sake of" statement with the person you are giving feedback to. It can help them see the same things you are sharing or at least understand better where you are coming from. And it can help both of you gauge the conversation.

3. **Give feedback for and to the situation–not the person.**

"The manner in which you offer constructive criticism needs to be delivered thoughtfully to the situation, not at the person." Kathy Obear

As difficult as sharing feedback about other folks can be, it is an important part of being in healthier and more complete relationships with folks. That feedback doesn't have to be negative or critical. It is very likely that you have really nice and positive feedback for folks you work with that you have not shared with them. Practicing building a team or relationship where you can share your observations and feedback with folks and they can share theirs with you allows this reciprocal norming of being in better community together. You can start by weaving in your constructive feedback in professional development sessions. The best feedback helps people learn to focus on their behaviors, not their essence as a human being.

The higher up you go in terms of leadership and power, the harder feedback can be to give. Power dynamics tend to make it even harder to give feedback about things those in a position of power don't notice about themselves.

For instance: if a person of color in leadership is attempting to give feedback to their white peers or people who report to them about their performance, the person of color will most likely experience the reflection of white fragility, resistance, and racist backlash at them.

There are many common criticism traps to avoid falling into, including:

> Giving feedback to only folks in marginalized identities while we don't notice or engage the same behaviors that members of privileged groups do. We tend to put people in minoritized identities under a microscope or under a bright spot light, while overlooking similar behaviors of others.

> Never giving feedback to people in marginalized identities. We often also only give positive feedback in coaching or supervisory relationships and avoid giving any developmental feedback for fear of being called sexist, racist, classist or xenophobic. As a result, people in marginalized groups may think they're doing great – until a lot of negative feedback is dumped on them all at once in performance reviews.

4. Prep work.

As you prepare to give feedback, it helps to write down thoughts, like, "In our last meeting, I observed something that seemed to have an impact you didn't intend. I'd like to explore this with you. Are you open to a conversation?"

A couple of important things about preparing. This work of journaling or practicing what you might say isn't to head off or out maneuver or predict their response. Instead it is to give you clarity on what you would like to say and then allow the space for you to be reflective on how they respond.

Secondly, engaging in consent practice, asking if they would like to receive the feedback and then honoring what they say can be really powerful and make it so that when you engage with folks, everyone is in a place to hear the feedback. If they say, not now or I'm busy, then you might ask if they'd be available later to talk. But if they open in the moment, you might ask a question to start, like, "Can you say more about your intentions and your thought process when you…'. If you are having a hard time thinking about what and how you might say it, it can help to ground your feedback within the vision, values, strategic plan, and expected competencies of the organization.

When you give feedback and are in a position to help support the person through it, say that. Being honest and transparent about our boundaries and capacities is one of the ways we can shore care for ourselves, others and relationships.

As you think about how to take this document back to your teams and to continue to breathe life into it, here is a useful practice to consider individually but also as a group.

How to Engage with this Document

Anti-racism work is first and foremost an invitation to engage in personal reflection and awareness-building. We recognize that the introduction of this document to DEQ could contribute to situations in which BIPOC staff are unnecessarily burdened.

If you are a person of color at DEQ, please **protect your peace** by acknowledging that you are not responsible for the advancement of equity values at DEQ. Direct any unwanted inquiries or invitations for conversation to ETC. For white people at DEQ who carry other marginalized identities (i.e. white, queer, women) pay close attention to the Solidarity section later on in this Organizational Assessment. If you don't hold very many marginalized identities, do your best to explore this Organizational Assessment with the understanding and acknowledgement that there are multiple perspectives and experiences of other people that will often challenge your sense of self and worldview.

Although the release of this document is an invitation to engage differently about equity at DEQ, for white folks, it is not an invitation to engage with BIPOC colleagues without the requisite connection. To do so would be to additionally burden your BIPOC colleagues with labor that is meant to be yours alone, or shared with white colleagues or those who have agreed to work with the agency on equity issues. If you uncover questions that you cannot answer on your own, start with other white colleagues and build with each other to determine how best to answer those questions.

It is important to note that those who were willing to share with the ETC team about their personal experiences within DEQ (positive, negative and indifferent) did so practicing vulnerability and humility. For those with marginalized identities, the vulnerability required to share comes with real risks. We heard many people express legitimate worries of retaliation, further ostracization and re-exposure to past harms in the sharing of ways in which DEQ produces some inequitable outcomes. ETC greatly appreciates the courage those who shared their stories, experiences and concerns with us.

At their core, Organizational Assessments help organizations and the people within them see themselves more clearly and in ways that are often hard to see or understand. As such, as you engage with this document (which was created to be organic and living and generative) you yourself must engage with it differently. Not as a passive recipient of knowledge or information, not just as an evaluator of veracity, but to see yourself inside of it as well- find the parts that feel new or painful or too familiar. Be curious about yourself in relation to the experiences and statistics and suggestions named inside this document. Organizational assessments take a lot of skill, practice, and humility. It's normal for this to

be difficult for a variety of reasons so please give yourself and others the capacity to engage in this in small bites instead of as a whole meal.

Sometimes being curious about how you don't know the answer, or don't know how you would find the answer is the right place to start. Sometimes being curious about who we should be in conversation, who or what is missing is the right place, and often being aware of and engaged with the ways in which you are having reactions, feelings, sensations as you engage with the material can help you figure out when you are in your head too much, when you are responding and seeking comfort, and when you are engaging meaningfully with the content - regardless of how hard or new it is.

Organizational assessments are intended to provide transparency and clarity for an organization to better understand its current strengths, weaknesses, and areas for growth and improvement. When we consider the historical and contemporaneous contextual factors that go into the makeup of the culture of DEQ, it is highly likely that an organizational assessment will stir up many complex feelings and thoughts as they relate to an individual's experience of that organization. In short, many will read this organizational assessment looking for evidence that validates their DEQ experiences, looking for evidence that validates their aspirational feelings of DEQ, or in some cases, even looking for evidence that will purposefully activate strong emotion. ETC has done its best to capture the multitude of individual experiences (while honoring anonymity and confidentiality when necessary), but the reader should keep in mind that on its own, the organizational assessment cannot encompass the entirety of the DEQ universe—instead, the organizational assessment will identify the specific equity needs that require greater understanding and more urgent attention. It can be tempting to view an organizational assessment as the primary method of creating accountability measures, but it can be most helpful if viewed as one of many potential tools DEQ may continue to access in a wider-ranging effort to increase accountability, transparency, and truth-telling across the organization.

Consider your positionality as you read this document. Your positionality is where you are located in regards to various pieces of your social identity (race, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, ability, etc.) and how those identities intersect and overlap to create your worldview, knowledge and practices. There will be many different perspectives relating to the organizational assessment and we must share an understanding that no two people will read this organizational assessment and interpret it in the same way. You will see noted in the organizational assessment that a theme of disconnection exists in many different ways. Avoid reading this organizational assessment as a mechanism for further disconnection. Try to read it in line with illuminating the pathway forward. While many obstacles still exist on that pathway forward, DEQ must continue its equity journey in the spirit of community and real relationship building. That requires DEQ to find room for healthy conflict and discourse around the recommendations and findings within the organizational assessment.

Also consider institutional power as you read this document. In an organizational setting, an individual's institutional power stems from two different channels: 1) power related to one's

position within the organizational hierarchy (as an example, those in management hold more power than front-line staff, but not more than those in executive leadership); and 2) power related to parts of our identities within our positionality (as an example, one may have institutional power related to gender expression, but not have power related to sexual orientation).   This organizational assessment cannot be read without acknowledgment of how our individual power (or lack thereof) influences the significance and importance of certain parts. This is essentially important to note because this organizational assessment will highlight the ways in which inattention to or the (intentional or unintentional) misuse of power has led to significant issues within DEQ. For those who hold power related to their position within DEQ, also consider how you represent yourself and DEQ when speaking to those who hold a lesser position of power within the organizational hierarchy. For those who hold very little institutional power at DEQ (and in society generally), consider how a purposeful identification of the role of power within DEQ provides context and understanding to your experiences.

It is important to understand why equity work must be led with an anti-racism focus. There are many 'isms and phobias' that make up our world (i.e. ra**cism**, sex**ism**, able**ism**, homo**phobia**, trans**phobia**, and so forth) and the root commonality between any of them is the misuse and abuse of power. But racism, specifically, has proven to be the toughest 'ism' for us to unravel in this country. Consider a conversation about pay equity that focuses solely on gender. In that study, we will find

"Intersectionality, defined first by Kimberle' Crenshaw, is how systems of oppression overlap and create distinct experiences for those who hold multiple marginalized parts of their identities."

that overall women are making 20% less than men for the same work–but without an intersection of race in our analysis, we will completely overlook that Latina women are making 10% less than white women. Conversations around equity that do not have a healthy and robust understanding of intersectionality are incomplete conversations. Because we have so much work to do around racism, we must start there.[3]

To assist you with this, we offer the following readers' guide to help you engage with and participate in this assessment:

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[3] In *DeGraffenreid v. General Motors*, five Black women sue their employer for discrimination based on the intersection of race and gender. The Court (without an understanding of intersectionality) held that federal law allows for a cause of action based on race or gender, but not the combination of both. The Court's ruling completely erased the unique experiences Black women face as a result of experiencing racism AND sexism at the same time.

● Goals, Strategy and Vision ●

○ In what ways are racial justice and decolonization in the goals, strategy and vision of your organization? In what ways will the success of your work advance racial justice and/or decolonization? What is going well and where is there room for growth?

○ To what extent do your main strategies build power (number of people taking action, level of commitment and political leadership, stronger relationships, ability to impact structural change) towards racial justice? What is going well here? Where is there room for growth?

○ If there is significant leadership of race and class-privileged people in your organizing, where are you getting feedback on strategy and direction from communities of color and working class communities?

● Leadership and Leadership Development ●

○ What are some of the most powerful ways your organization is developing anti-racist leaders, formally and informally?

○ How much of a priority is it for your organization to develop the leadership of people of color, indigenous people, poor and working class people, and anti-racist white people? How are you doing at this? What is going well and where is there room for improvement?

○ Look at who is in formal and informal leadership in your organizational work. Who is represented and who isn't? What political values are held by the people who are in leadership?

● Accountability ●

○ Who do you consider yourself/your organization to be accountable to around racial justice?

○ Do you/your organization have a political compass that helps you discern whose leadership you are accountable to? How would you describe it? How is it actively developed?

○ To what extent are the politics you/your organization feel accountable to rooted in the liberation struggles of oppressed people, including people of color, indigenous people, people in the Third World, poor people, women, queer and trans people, and people with disabilities? Where could the politics you/your organization are accountable to benefit from stronger intersectionality and internationalism?

○ What does your accountability look like in practice? What is going well? Where is there room for growth? What kinds of feedback are you getting? Are you soliciting feedback and who from?

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● Alliances and Partnerships ●

○ Who are your community/organizational partners? How do dynamics around privilege or oppression impact those partnerships?

○ If you partner with majority-white organizations, to what extent are you supporting them to bring a racial justice approach?

○ To what extent are you proactively supporting the leadership of organizations in communities of color working against institutional racism and/or colonization?

● Organizational Culture ●

○ Who sets the cultural norms in your organization? Who do these norms welcome and encourage, and who might be discouraged?

○ Has your organization experienced internal and/or external conflict around race and racism? How was this responded to? What went well? What would you do differently next time?

○ As a majority-white organization, is that intentional? If not, what cultural and political factors may be contributing?

ETC would assess DEQ somewhere between 2 (Passive) and 3 (Symbolic Change). Where do you think DEQ is?

Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist Multicultural Organization

MONOCULTURAL.   ⇒.   MULTICULTURAL.   ⇒.   ANTI-RACIST.   ⇒.   ANTI-RACIST MULTICULTURAL
Racial and Cultural Differences Seen as Deficits ==> Tolerant of Racial and Cultural Differences ==> Racial and Cultural Differences Seen as Assets

1. Exclusive	2. Passive	3. Symbolic Change	4. Identity Change	5. Structural Change	6. Fully Inclusive
An Exclusionary Institution	A "Club" Institution	A Compliance Organization	An Affirming Institution	A Transforming Institution	Anti-Racist Multicultural Organization in a Transformed Society
*Intentionally and publicly excludes or segregates African Americans, Native Americans, Latinos, and Asian Americans *Intentionally and publicly enforces the racist status quo throughout institution *Institutionalization of	*Tolerant of a limited number of "token" People of Color and members from other social identity groups allowed in with "proper" perspective and credentials. *May still secretly limit or exclude People of Color in contradiction to public policies	*Makes official policy pronouncements regarding multicultural diversity *Sees itself as "non-racist" institution with open doors to People of Color *Carries out intentional inclusiveness efforts, recruiting "someone of	*Growing understanding of racism as barrier to effective diversity *Develops analysis of systemic racism *Sponsors programs of anti-racism training *New consciousness of institutionalized white	*Commits to process of intentional institutional restructuring, based upon anti-racist analysis and identity *Audits and restructures all aspects of institutional life to ensure full participation of People of Color, including their world-view, culture and	*Future vision of an institution and wider community that has overcome systemic racism and all other forms of oppression. *Institution's life reflects full participation and shared power with diverse racial, cultural and economic groups

racism includes formal policies and practices, teachings, and decision making on all levels *Usually has similar intentional policies and practices toward other socially oppressed groups such as women, gays and lesbians, Third World citizens, etc. *Openly maintains the dominant group's power and privilege	*Continues to intentionally maintain white power and privilege through its formal policies and practices, teachings, and decision making on all levels of institutional life *Often declares, "We don't have a problem." *Monocultural norms, policies and procedures of dominant culture viewed as the "right" way" business as usual" *Engages issues of diversity and social justice only on club member's terms and within their comfort zone.	color" on committees or office staff *Expanding view of diversity includes other socially oppressed groups But... *"Not those who make waves" *Little or no contextual change in culture, policies, and decision making *Is still relatively unaware of continuing patterns of privilege, paternalism and control *Token placements in staff positions: must assimilate into organizational culture	power and privilege *Develops intentional identity as an "anti-racist" institution *Begins to develop accountability to racially oppressed communities *Increasing commitment to dismantle racism and eliminate inherent white advantage *Actively recruits and promotes members of groups have been historically denied access and opportunity But... *Institutional structures and culture that maintain white power and privilege still intact and relatively untouched	lifestyles *Implements structures, policies and practices with inclusive decision making and other forms of power sharing on all levels of the institutions life and work *Commits to struggle to dismantle racism in the wider community, and builds clear lines of accountability to racially oppressed communities *Anti-racist multicultural diversity becomes an institutionalized asset *Redefines and rebuilds all relationships and activities in society, based on anti-racist commitments	in determining its mission, structure, constituency, policies and practices *Members across all identity groups are full participants in decisions that shape the institution, and inclusion of diverse cultures, lifestyles, and interest *A sense of restored community and mutual caring *Allies with others in combating all forms of social oppression *Actively works in large communities (regional, national, global) to eliminate all forms of oppression and to create multicultural organizations.

Important Initial Considerations for this Organizational Assessment

Throughout this organizational assessment process, the Engage to Change team received lots of feedback from individuals across DEQ about their hopes and expectations for this assessment. These hopes and expectations fall across a wide spectrum. Some hope this Organizational Assessment will be validating of their experiences. Some hope that it can be weaponized and will force leadership into change. Some see it as a vehicle for simply exploring their curiosities. And some even expect it to offer little to nothing at all–evidence of a growing sentiment of opposition to anything deemed to be supportive of diversity, equity and inclusion work.

To be clear, this Organizational Assessment is written in the hopes that it provides ongoing resources and guidance to DEQ for as long as possible. It is meant to open the door to innovative thought, to new perspectives on a healthy DEQ work environment, and to bravery in finding ways to heal and redress past harms throughout the agency. It is written in a format and style that will likely feel incredibly unfamiliar to most. The Organizational Assessment itself will be far less valuable as a stand-alone document than it will be as a catalyst on how DEQ sparks cultural change towards a more equitable and just workplace. To that end, the Organizational Assessment is far from perfect. In fact, anti-racism principles predict that perfection is unattainable nor might the quest for perfection be useful. Life is messy. Humans are messy. It follows that equity work done properly, focusing on humanity, is messy as well.

There will be critiques of this organizational assessment. That is an undeniable certainty. Some of the critiques will be constructive and meant to push DEQ further towards its equity goals. Some of the critiques will be steeped in white supremacy or resistance and meant to hold DEQ back from its equity goals. Regardless, the Organizational Assessment itself should help DEQ intentionally and meaningfully explore and/or respond to any and all critiques.

Consider how thought-terminating cliché's work. A thought-terminating cliché (also known as a semantic stop-sign, a thought-stopper, bumper sticker logic, or cliché thinking) is a form of loaded language intended to end an argument and quell cognitive dissonance. Its function is to stop a conversation from

proceeding further, ending the conversation with a cliché rather than continuing an effort to understand. They are often used as a method of dismissing dissent or justifying fallacious logic.

The ETC team heard plenty of feedback that DEQ has a culture that has an over-reliance on quantitative data. At DEQ, that means action doesn't occur until quantitative data questions have been answered. But requiring quantitative data (think: 'asking for receipts') to make equity work actionable becomes a distraction and derailment. And while using and understanding quantitative data is an important part of DEQ's work, over-reliance may interfere when equity work requires a more relationship based approach. That focus may lead some to read this organizational assessment with a willingness to accept the findings and recommendations only if there is quantitative evidence supporting those findings and recommendations. Asking for receipts becomes a thought-terminating cliché.

Consider the following: "Henry reads the Organizational Assessment and sees the recommendation, 'DEQ craft and implement a plan/policy to respond to microaggressions.' He states, 'I'm curious to know how many microaggressions happen at DEQ on a daily basis to know if it's worth spending so much time and money on addressing what might just be happening every once in a while to just a few people.'

Eric responds, 'I'm pretty sure that some people wouldn't even report microaggressions because it would be too much of a headache. How would we track unreported microaggressions?'

Henry answers, 'If people can use discretion to decide what is and isn't a microaggression, and some people don't speak up because it's not worth it, that sounds exactly like the waste of time and money I'm concerned about. We can't set up policies based on how people feel about things. We're an agency that operates based on facts, not feelings.'"

A thought-terminating cliché does two harmful things to ongoing conversation: 1) It shuts down the practice of critical thought; 2) It requires people to shift from the topic of focus and fumble through resolving the cliché itself. Notice when you reach for these clichés as opposed to thinking more expansively and critically.

In this Organizational Assessment ETC has made many observations that do not appear directly connected to quantitative data. There are many reasons for that. The disconnect may be because some things are too hard to quantify (see section on the 'Microaggression Plan'), ETC has chosen to withhold some quantitative data to protect anonymity and confidentiality, or even that

one instance of discrimination may be more than enough evidence to require action (i.e. an incident of overt ableism or racism that leads to significant harm). Continuing to seek quantitative data as a way to verify stories of marginalization or discrimination is a common 'off-ramp' for those looking to avoid the hard work of addressing that marginalization. Additionally, those seeking that quantitative data to validate (note: different than 'verify') their own stories of marginalization or discrimination are likely doing so because they have historically not been believed. Keep in mind that ETC heard hundreds of stories during the information gathering process. It is impossible to quantify all of those stories–and quantification is not required for those stories to be true and real.

Consider another example. Say you are on a hiring team with a colleague, evaluating candidates. Your colleague suggests taking a qualified candidate out of the running, suggesting that she won't be able to meet the role's stringent travel requirements as a single mom. You know that this candidate has never brought up not being able to travel, and when you ask for an example, your colleague cannot provide one. Knowing that you are witnessing bias and potential discrimination based on caregiver status and potentially gender identity, you challenge your colleague and name the bias. Your colleague replies, "Here we go again."

Now, you start using thought-terminating clichés on yourself. By using a broad cliché as their means of counterargument, they may stop your thought by suggesting that you are in a redundant or cyclical argument with no end that is pointless. Instead of questioning themselves, you are questioning yourself. Are you just making something out of nothing? Are you making mountains out of molehills? Being too negative?

The thing is, you weren't. You wanted to engage in an honest discussion about hiring bias and discrimination in a situation that, by all accounts — minimizing hiring bias, giving a candidate a fair shot, not losing out on an opportunity to bring on a talented new team member, and even protecting the company legally — wasn't pointless, cyclical, or necessarily in keeping with an implied suggestion that you 'stir up trouble' with no purpose other than to do so."

Union, Leadership Tension

As part of this Organizational Assessment, the ETC team met regularly with the DEQ DEI Council to provide updates and insight as to the organizational assessment process. As part of that process, the DEI Council shared some invaluable feedback to help guide the data collection process as well as highlight some important systemic issues that DEQ must consider going forward in order for DEQ to make substantial improvements and gains in its

equity efforts. DEQ leadership offered feedback along the way as well, but chose not to view finished drafts of the Organizational Assessment in an attempt to avoid undue influence (or even the appearance of undue influence) on the final assessment. ETC's work on the Organizational Assessment is primarily guided by the work order contract between DEQ and ETC and not guided by the collective bargaining agreement but that does not negate that the CBA is an important part of this organizational assessment process. ETC acknowledges that for many there is a hope and expectation that this Organizational Assessment puts to rest some of the tension that exists between labor and management. Instead, this Organizational Assessment will highlight the need for DEQ to continue seeking ways to improve the relationship between labor and management to better address labor's needs.

Throughout ETC's work with DEQ the tension between the DEQ union and DEQ leadership times interferes with the anti-racism and equity principles ETC knows are proven to be effective in equitable organizational change. The scope of ETC's Organizational Assessment and the written assessment itself does not create room to dig into that conflict in a healthy way–it is an incredibly complicated conflict that will require ongoing dedication and resilience by all at DEQ. There is some work necessary for all of DEQ to explore to create a healthy landscape to address and resolve this tension. Some of the recommendations in this Organizational Assessment speak directly to pathways of resolution.   Even after this assessment process is complete, there may continue to be unresolved issues between the CBA and the Organizational Assessment.   It is important to note that where there are unresolved issues, the Organizational Assessment's lack of narrative around them is not evidence that those issues do not exist.

> If you are reading this section, and are unable to distinguish between the tension of the collective bargaining agreement and anti-racism work, that is a moment for reflection as to what you may be missing.

Back to the tension–there are several things worth pointing out regarding this tension–but first, we have to understand where the tension comes from. Historically, collective bargaining agreements are used to organize labor in order to diffuse power structures that can unfairly wield that power towards individual laborers who do not have the ability to establish fair employment conditions on their own. There is a history of employees at DEQ being unable to bring about equitable change because of a power structure that has been unable or unwilling to explore that change in a healthy way. The ETC team heard many stories and experiences of the DEQ power structure meeting calls for equity with indifference, denial, or inadequacy. The traces and remnants of those past missteps still live with many individuals (especially

those who have been at DEQ for 5+ years) and still live in the policies and practices of groups and some in positions of leadership/power. Over time, those who have suffered through incidents of discrimination, bigotry and a white-centered culture have been left with the impossible task of being responsible for shifting DEQ to a more equitable organization without the adequate support required to actually do so. At some point, it becomes intolerable for many marginalized employees to remain in this type of environment. This leads to an increase in employee turnover, employee dissatisfaction, and/or employee complaints. DEQ is at a stage in its existence where many people who are marginalized are no longer willing to tolerate such an environment. This means that many of these folks are no longer interested in ignoring some of the more significant systemic issues at DEQ.

At this point in DEQ's equity efforts and ETC's fact-finding efforts throughout the assessment process, ETC has determined that there is no entity at DEQ that has the anti-racism experience and practice to resolve this tension on its own. Without a fundamental shift towards more equitable processes, DEQ will only be able to access the tools it has historically relied upon to try and resolve ongoing conflicts. And in this space, the tension lives. Philosopher, educator and civil rights activist Audre Lorde famously wrote, "The master's tools will never dismantle the master's house. They may allow us to temporarily beat him at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change."

Oppressive and unjust structures do not embed the processes for their own demise within their policies and practices. As an organization, DEQ is very new to the idea of equity, anti-racism and anti-oppression work and those seeking change within the confines of its historical practices will be disappointed to find their efforts end up easily stymied or performative. DEQ must begin the long and hard process of finding and creating new tools. While the collective bargaining agreement provides some guidance and a place to organize important goals and agreements, it on its own, is insufficient in moving DEQ to a more equitable organization. Some of the DEQ mechanisms formed before a shift to anti-racism work were not formed with anti-racism, equity, and anti-oppression practices in mind. At the same time, that should not be used as an excuse to do nothing or give up on new approaches. This Organizational Assessment is a new tool for DEQ to use in its ongoing equity efforts.

Vehicle Inspection Program

The ETC team also heard a lot of feedback from DEQ employees at all levels of the DEQ hierarchy that the Vehicle Inspection Program seems very isolated from the rest of DEQ. ETC

even found that to be true in its effort to gather information from DEQ-VIP employees. The Vehicle Inspection Program is also one of the more public facing components of DEQ. Many folks across the state think about their interactions with the VIP first when asked about how they are impacted by DEQ. Because many at VIP are 'in the field', there is much less office time or structured space to provide feedback regarding their work experiences at DEQ. ETC offered several ways of providing feedback for the Organizational Assessment, none of which proved particularly effective in getting VIP feedback. As an example, ETC created a form for digital feedback which went out to DEQ employees, but many who work in the VIP are not given individual laptops as their work doesn't require that they be stationed at a desk. For those folks to fill out a survey, many of them would likely have to commit to doing so outside of their regular work hours and from their personal devices.

Further along in this Organizational Assessment, there is language around the 'silo-ing' that happens at DEQ. The Vehicle Inspection Program may be the most extreme example of this at DEQ. At this point, the ETC team doesn't feel like it has enough information to make recommendations regarding the inner workings and structure of the VIP, but does identify the need to have deliberate and purposeful conversations about ways to shift the isolated nature of the VIP at DEQ. At the same time, it does not mean that the rest of this document is irrelevant to folks that work in the VIP. From what ETC was able to gather, there are many issues reflected in the Organizational Assessment that are also prevalent throughout the VIP. As DEQ begins to explore new and more equitable practices across the agency, it is imperative that DEQ look for ways to increase collaboration and communication between VIP and the rest of the agency.

Why We Must Lead with Anti-Racism

Words like 'anti-racism', 'diversity', 'equity', 'inclusion' or 'woke' have been significantly politicized and appropriated by some to strip them of their significance and meanings. This is white supremacy in action. It should not be controversial to say we should want to live in a world free of racism. And those that deny racism exists are willfully ignorant and uninterested in the myriad of ways in which data, both quantitative and qualitative (throughout the life of this country), continue to show up in all institutions. There are disadvantageous disparities in education, healthcare, the criminal justice system, home ownership, wages, lifespan, etc. that are all directly linked to historical and ongoing racism. Denial of this requires cognitive dissonance of those unwilling to critically examine these structures and at the same time, the dehumanization of those suffering under these structures.

Keep in mind that the study of racism is not a study of culture, but a study of power. As an example, a white person who doesn't speak English may move to the United States and feel significant discrimination based on their 'outsiderness'. But that discrimination is not the same as racism towards people of color, nor does anti-racism seek to invalidate that person's experiences. That person is not experiencing racism (even though it feels terrible), but anti-immigrant sentiment (xenophobia). Here's the important connection: racism and xenophobia are linked because they are both a result of the misuse and abuse of power by those that control and dictate cultural norms. To preview the concept of 'intersectionality,' consider how a Cambodian immigrant of Asian descent will likely have a very different experience than a white immigrant from Germany. To be clear, all forms of oppression exist because of the unjust use of power. Which means all forms of oppression are related. A core feature that keeps racism and other forms of oppression alive is to pit marginalized groups against each other. Dismantling racism (especially anti-Black racism) becomes the centerpiece of anti-racism work. As an example, dismantling ableism without talking about racism is actually an attempt to dismantle ableism towards white people.

A Historic Timeline of DEI Efforts at DEQ

2007 Assessment

The 2007 Assessment was done with a focus on organizational health looking at metrics for calculating what a healthy organization looks like. Three key factors were identified: 1) lack of emotional safety 2) lack of communication and 3) lack of clear boundaries.

For lack of emotional safety, the focus was on employees' inability to feel they could have a different approach to an issue than what management wanted. There was a "fear of punishment for not pursuing the right management goals or proposals." It was identified that a top-down approach from the Director at the time led to this dynamic and led to a lack of communication from the top-down,

The lack of communication was found to be in all areas including identifying issues, feedback on specific actions from both managers and colleagues. The assessment found that DEQ had two ways to provide feedback. First, was a "knee-jerk" reaction without serious consideration to the proposed idea. And Second, indirect feedback "often negative" that felt like an ambush of sorts that was seen when an employee would be removed from a project/assignment or a talking to by managers without explaining why they were removed. This was found to lead to diminished emotional safety and a lack of job satisfaction.

Boundary management was identified as a "huge issue at DEQ". Due to the organizational framework of operating under a regulatory and administrative structure, one of the most problematic aspects of DEQ was the focus on the group as opposed to the individual, meaning that most complaints identified by the union was the lack of appreciation for the individual. "Organizational development at DEQ focuses on groups and tasks." This was expanded upon by highlighting the way DEQ utilizes "diffused responsibility". There appears to be unclear lines of demarcation between responsibility of staff and managers and where final say can come from. From the top-down model, members of the executive team did not feel free to assert their individual opinions for fear of retribution from the director and would instead steer away to avoid conflict. This led managers to use the lack of clarity regarding boundaries to avoid responsibility and accountability, thereby diffusing responsibility up.

The other extreme of this is the walled boundaries between DEQ that creates silos. There also appears to be two distinct cultures: at the leadership and management level, there is an understanding of the policies, goals, and objectives of the organization; the more technical rank-and-file employees are focused on environmental stewardship and regulatory processes. Those are the staff who tend to remain silent and who will get along by going along. This was highlighted by the union who sees a clear class structure, divided into employees and managers and describes it as a double standard: one for managers and one for staff - a structure that leads to significant equity concerns. Union Representatives have complained about their inability to understand how management actions are consistent with stated goals and policies, further leading to the siloed nature of managers and the represented staff.

Overall, the 2007 organizational assessment by The Root Management focused on organizational development and the benefits of strategic thinking. It highlighted the three major issues listed above without clear direction on how to improve conditions.

2019 Affirmative Action Plan

In 2019 Governor Kate Brown released an affirmative action plan for 2019 to 2021, a follow up of the governor's 2017-2019 Affirmative Action Plan, requesting that DEQ demonstrate Oregon's commitment to eliminate institutional and structural barriers impacting employee attraction, selection, engagement, and retention. At that time, DEQ conducted analysis of its candidate pools and actual hires (represented below), showing that DEQ did improve in hiring women, veterans, and people of different abilities, but did not do so in hiring people of color.

	% of Applicant Pool June 2016 to June 2017	% of New Hires June 2016 to June 2017	% of Difference Between Applicant Pool and New Hires	% of Applicant Pool June 2017 to June 2018	% of New Hires June 2017 to June 2018	% of Difference Between Applicant Pool and New Hires
Female	46	43.7	-2.3	45	48.2	3.2
Male	51	56.2	5.2	50	51.8	1.8
Declined to Answer	3	0	-3	3	0	
Unknown	0	N/A	N/A	2	N/A	N/A
Total	100	99.9	N/A	100	100	N/A
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1	1.5	.5	2	0	-2
Asian	8	3.12	-4.88	7	7.8	.8
Black or African American	4	1.5	-2.5	3	.8	-2.2
Decline to Answer	6	17.18	11.18	7	24.6	17.6
Hispanic or Latino	5	1.5	-3.5	6	1.75	-4.25
Hispanic/Asian	<1	0	-<1	<1	0	-<1
Native-Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1	0	-1	1	0	-1
Two or More Races	5	6.25	1.25	5	4.4	-.6
White	70	69	-1	69	60.5	-9.5
Total	100	100	NA	100	99.9	N/A
Veterans	7.9	10.9	3	6.8	7	.2
People with Disabilities	0	1.5	1.5	1	8	7

Several methods were identified including training, education, and a development plan for hiring, retaining, and promoting employees from underrepresented communities. The plan also called for the creation of an agency-wide diversity Council as well as employee resource groups and affinity groups. The structure called for a manager to lead the "Diversify the Workforce" affinity group, which was open to all DEQ employees of color and white allies. Ultimately, the DEQ director was responsible for communicating and implementing the affirmative action plan and creating the policy statement. They were also expected to review, with all division administrators, their affirmative action and diversity and inclusion efforts as well as monitor progress toward meeting the goals and objectives of the plan. The division and regional administrators were to be accountable to the director and the deputy director. Managers and supervisors were to be accountable to their administrators to implement the plan. The human resources manager had the responsibility of administering the agency's equal employment policy and affirmative action plan.

DEQ Efforts on Diversity Equity and Inclusion

In 2020 the DEI committee was created to be an informal opportunity for employees to talk and to discuss related issues. The committee had a top-down approach with leadership holding a grip on it that didn't allow for the free flow of information. There was one mandatory implicit bias training for all DEQ employees. Several groups were started after the affirmative action plan, including employee resource groups such as the BIPOC group, an affinity group for allies, and a Pride group among others.

In 2018, DEQ hired BerryDunn to complete a strategic plan. Several attempts to begin the process were started but unsuccessful as it became clear that DEQ needed to address some underlying concerns around inequities and racism before a strategic planning process could be meaningfully different and move DEQ in the correct direction. Later ETC was engaged to help assist BerryDunn in the strategic planning process. In late 2022, BerryDunn had removed themselves from the strategic planning process with DEQ because in their determination, they didn't have the skills or tools to help DEQ navigate the type of strategic plan rooted and centered in anti-racism and addressing inequities both within DEQ and with it's work throughout Oregon. By 2023, BerryDunn was no longer involved in strategic planning. Engage to Change has spent the beginning of 2023 focused on completing an Organizational Assessment (OA). To inform and prepare for the OA, ETC has compiled a list of documents for review, completed interviews, met with the DEI Council and leadership team, and led training cohorts.

Timeline of the Organizational Assessment Project

■   Fall of 2020 Engage to Change LLC was brought in to do a three part managers training on identifying and interrupting racism at DEQ. As part of that training, ETC conducted an organization wide survey that gauged where folks at DEQ were at around anti-racism. The short informal survey revealed large gaps in understanding. As a result ETC wrote a short report with suggestions including doing a more comprehensive organizational assessment.

■   2021- Early in the year an interim DEI Restructuring Group was formed to set up a new DEI Council structure due to the issues with the last one.

■   Fall of 2021, DEQ awarded a RFP for anti-racism training, leadership development and strategic planning to Engage to Change after a competitive bidding process. As part of the successful bid, ETC was contracted to assist with strategic planning alongside BerryDunn who had previously been awarded the contract for Strategic Planning Services.

■   November 2021- A new DEI council was formed from the efforts of the DEI restructuring group.

■   December 2021 DEQ hired its first agency DEI Coordinator Natalie Nava.

- May 2022

    - Coordinate with the DEI Council to determine roles and responsibilities for the Organizational Assessment

    - Kick off meeting with DEI Council about the Organizational Assessment

- July 2022

    - ETC met with the DEI Council and DEQ leadership to help determine the process for the Organizational Assessment data collection and processes

    - As part of those conversations and others, ETC proposed a format for how to conduct the Organizational Assessment that involved 1:1 interviews, group conversations, review of documents, and preparatory training for the DEI council and the DEQ leadership team as part of the strategy

- January 2023

    - ETC trainings begin with DEI Council and managers

    - Interview members of DEI Council, affinity group members and managers begin

- February 2023

    - Ongoing trainings with DEI Council and managers

    - Interviews ongoing with interested persons and previous employees

    - Update DEI Council on Organizational Assessment and present timeline for first draft and final product due by June 31, 2023

- March 2023

    - Final trainings with DEI Council and managers

    - Interviews ongoing and scheduled through April

    - OA update to DEI Council

- April 2023

    - Present parts of Draft Organizational Assessment to DEI Council and DEQ leadership

    - Review feedback from DEI Council on Organizational Assessment

    - Final interviews with interested persons

- Finalize Organizational Assessment

- May 2023

  - Present final draft of Organizational Assessment to DEI Council who reviewed it and provided verbal and written feedback

- June 2023

  - Present final version of the Organization Assessment to DEQ as a whole

  - Meet with DEI Council to provide context and to discuss how to engage with the Organization Assessment beyond the written word

  - Six 2 to 3-hour Organizational Assessment Presentations to DEI Council and Leadership Tea

Methodology

In approaching this work, it is clear that old ways of research (which treats people as products or conversations as transactions) will not help illuminate new ways of understanding and being in healthier relationships. To that end, ETC uses a hybrid approach to organizational assessment, data gathering, and processing that evolves traditional evaluation methods typically used by government and other institutions. Our approach draws heavily on Indigenous methodologies of research and embodies equity and co-liberation, interrupting colonizing and oppressive power dynamics and practices of elevating/relegating certain voices and information. This process is inherently developmental in nature and tailored to complex and changing environments to provide continuous feedback. Our process focuses on information which tells the story of an agency and measures its impacts using methods grounded in Indigenous, Black, and folks of color-based ways of knowing and valuing.

These approach methods, which have been developed and refined and adapted for millenia focus on the 6 R's to empower and engage communities, responding to their needs, experiences, knowledge, and values:

- *Respect* for diverse individual, cultural, and community knowledge and values
- R*elevance* to community and cultural needs and experiences, defined co-creatively
- *Reciprocity,* continuously ensuring mutual benefit between the community and evaluator(s)
- *Responsibility* by the evaluator(s) to empower, engage with, and consider the community
- *Relationship* as a central way of recognizing and supporting each other's humanity and individual and community needs in a non-extractive and transactional way.

- *Representation* is important to be able to recognize and center the diversity and nuance of the multitude of ways and perspectives of voices and experiences.

Our assessment models borrow from many cultural traditions of different ways of knowing and valuing of knowledge of all types and is centered in being:

1. Community-led
2. Incorporates community of color and Indigenous communities' world views
3. Purposeful
4. Personal
5. Based on relationships
6. Pushes back against colonial and white supremacist boundaries
7. Focused on resilience and resistance
8. Raises up Black, brown, Indigenous voices and peoples
9. Identifies and names power as it moves
10. Is direct and clear and healing centered.

Evaluation involves the expertise of diverse interested parties in the evaluation process itself—ultimately revealing a richer and more comprehensive picture through a plurality of perspectives.

This assessment includes a generative process of re-evaluating and growing as new information is uncovered. It used a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods: survey data from hundreds of self-selected employees at DEQ were solicited, collected, analyzed and summarized. Storytelling and listening sessions were held and the notes reviewed to find themes. Key themes and quotes were then organized and examined for patterns. Observation findings were synthesized according to reach, fidelity, contextual factors, and participant experience. Finally, documents, notes, and artifacts were also assessed using thematic analysis.

While traditional evaluation sometimes uses mixed methods like these, the qualitative is often valued less than the quantitative, an emphasis that literally disembodies individuals from their stories and voices. By contrast, ETC's evaluation not only heavily incorporates qualitative data, we held space for people to share in culturally relevant ways that suited their experiences (sometimes one on one, sometimes in affinity spaces, sometimes in larger group contexts).

Linda Tuhiwai Smith advises us to be concerned "not so much with the actual technique of selecting a method but much more with the context in which research problems are conceptualized and designed, and with the implications of research for its participants and their communities.[4]" Adding to that, Shawn Wilson asserts, "Indigenous research methodology means talking about relational accountability. As a researcher you are answering to all your relations when you are doing research.[5]"

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[4] Decolonizing methodologies: research and Indigenous peoples. 2nd edition, 2012, p. ix.
[5] What is an Indigenous Research Methodology? In *Canadian Journal of Native Education*, 2001, p. 177.

Sources of Methodologies	
The 6 R's	We center the 6 R's—respect, relevance, relationship, reciprocity, representation and responsibility—to empower and engage communities, responding to their needs, experiences, knowledge, and values.
Community-based participatory evaluation (CBPE)	We use CBPE to emphasize participation and action: "Communities of inquiry and action evolve and address questions and issues that are significant for those who participate as co-researchers/evaluators". We use community participation to advance equity, and as we evaluate, experimentation, and action are grounded in experience and social history.
Critical Theory	Research as a form of social or cultural criticism and which accepts certain basic assumptions: that all thought is fundamentally mediated by power relations that are socially and historically constructed; that facts can never be isolated from the domain of values or removed from some form of ideological inscription;…that certain groups in any society and particular societies are privileged over others and, although the reasons for this privileging may vary widely, the oppression that characterizes contemporary societies is most forcefully reproduced when subordinates accept their social status as natural, necessary, or inevitable; that oppression has many faces and that focusing on only one at the expense of others (e.g., class oppression versus racism) often elides the interconnections among them; and, finally, that mainstream research practices are generally, although most often unwittingly, implicated in the reproduction of systems of class, race, and gender oppression.
Participatory Action Research	*Based on the work of Paula Friere. Participatory research is rooted in what Brazilian popular educator Paulo Freire called "the educational component of the revolutionary process." Influenced by his famous book, Pedagogy of the Oppressed in the late 1960's, it was coined by Indian educator Rajesh Tandon in the early 1970's. Initially, it involved peasants and workers who created popular education circles to advance their consciousness with research skills rooted in a problem-posing approach, analyzing the structural and systemic roots of problems in*

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	order to identify long term solutions.
Developmental Evaluation	We provide continuous feedback for novel projects in complex and changing environments, which drives innovation and strategic learning. It is also used to frame concepts, map processes, surface issues and insights, and track developments and changes/effects.
Mixed Methods	We combine quantitative, qualitative, and non-traditional data to arrive at a richer understanding of project/program processes and impacts.
Transformative & Liberatory methods	We use methods that value liberatory methods and include a broad array of sources and types of knowledge and information. We are intentional about making explicit and interrupting oppressive assumptions, practices, and systems, and promote healing and decolonizing. This includes using pancultural and global Indigenous traditions to reimagine traditional methods.

Dr. Raul Quiñones Rosado's Consciousness-in-Action model and other methodologies provided the foundational analytical framework for the evaluation of this work. This holistic paradigm is used to understand all that exists, analyze phenomena, and guide thought and action. The application of this work as a foundational analytical framework is meant to align the analysis with the projects' approach of applying BIPOC—including global Indigenous—ways of knowing, being, seeing, and valuing the evaluation. It provides a conceptual framework that considers shifts in knowing and will (which maps to knowledge/ awareness and behavior in the logic model), individual- and collective-level changes, and multiple dimensions that are often overlooked. This foundational framework is being applied as an alternative to standard reports that often fail to explicitly use foundational conceptual models, account for multilevel layers of complexity (e.g., exclusion of somatic work,, hyperfocus on the individual, etc.), or explain the underlying mechanisms believed to drive changes in knowledge, behavior, and organizational policies, processes, and culture.

ETC also greatly respects the importance of confidentiality and anonymity. For people to share their stories and experiences, they must find safety in their sharing. We greatly appreciate those in the agency who were willing to share with us their experiences and ETC has gone to great lengths to ensure that confidentiality and anonymity is honored unless there is explicit permission to share names and stories that are not fit for public consumption.

The hope is this assessment and the recommendations for anti-racist capacity-building efforts at DEQ during this extraordinary moment in time, helps to tell the story of DEQ's

history, provides insights into the emergent processes and provides best practices and lessons learned.

The Six R's: Guiding Principles and Conceptual Framework

Respect is due regard for the feelings, wishes, rights, and traditions of others. It is mutually empowering by showing honor, considering the well-being of others' ideas, and treating others with kindness and courtesy. We need to show respect to the Indigenous community by recognizing the value of their knowledge, traditions, core values, particular worldview, and cultural integrity[6]. Respect also encompasses honoring the Earth and mutually respecting the natural world and the elements[7]. It recognizes the interconnectedness that Indigenous peoples have with place. Through respect, researchers can fulfill their role and obligations to the community, to relations both human and natural, and develop long-term relationships with participants.

Relationship is grounded in complex layers of Indigenous and Black and brown identity and relationship with land, nature, ancestors, community, and future generations. It is founded on kinship and accountability, built on mutual honesty and trust, and shapes Indigenous and community of color's realities[8]. The Indigenous research paradigm encompasses the belief that Indigenous knowledges are relational and all living things in creation embody knowledge[9]. When conducting research, the researcher must be honest and clearly identify the purpose and motivation behind the research.

Relevance is being closely connected or appropriate to the education, experiences, perspectives, priorities, and ways of knowing, living, and doing in Indigenous communities[10]

Relevance needs to be expanded and embedded in all stages of the research. This includes, but is not limited to: careful consideration of how the research is relevant to Indigenous peoples and communities, Indigenous worldviews, and their ways of living and knowing, appropriate methods such as oral methods (e.g. storytelling, talking circle) rather than exclusively written literature and must consider the historical and social contexts of the tribal, Black, and other marginalized communities; in short, research must be meaningful and useful to Indigenous communities,[11]

Reciprocity is a continuous and intentional exchange process. It is "the belief that as we receive from others, we must also offer to others.[12]" Practicing reciprocity allows all parties involved in the research to engage in a continuous dynamic relationship where they are

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[6] adapted from Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991; Steinhauer quoting Cree Elders, 2002.

[7] Assembly of First Nations, 2021.

[8] Cajete 2000; Kovach 2008; Wilson 2001, 2008; Kimmerer, 2013

[9] Brayboy & Maughan, 2009; Wilson, 2001

[10] Goody, 1982, as quoted in Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991; Kovach, 2008; Stanton et al., 2019.

[11] Kovach, 2008.

[12] Rice, 2005, p. 7.

provided equal responsibility to negotiate relationship building. In reciprocal relationships, resources are considered gifts[13].

Responsibility is accountability for the people and knowledge put in our trust. We are responsible for the reciprocal relationships we have with Indigenous and communities of color, the Earth, and all that is a part of them. Mutual responsibility for these values is crucial in the reciprocal relationships between Indigenous, Black, brown and non-Indigenous communities.[14]

The concept of responsibility encompasses more than ethical research practices. Kimmerer (2013) says that as humans we must ask ourselves, "What is our gift? And how shall we use it? A gift is also our responsibility[15]. Human capacity for gratitude is one of our many gifts, but gratitude alone isn't enough. It's intertwined with reciprocity.

Representation is having presence at the table and acting or speaking on behalf of another person or an entire group. Representation of Indigenous and other communities of color empowers them to identify and share what is relevant and important to their people. It allows the voice of the community and of each participant to be heard[16]. Further, it is important to pay close attention to the history of colonized research conducted on marginalized populations[17]. We have conducted this assessment in a way that pays attention to the impact of colonized methodologies on Indigenous communities and their assets.

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[13] Suzuki & Knudtson, 1992; Kimmerer, 2013.
[14] Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991; Wilson, 2008.
[15] Kimmerer, p. 347
[16] Kovach, 2008; Deloria & Wildcat, 2001.
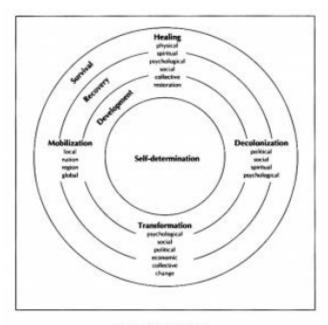[17] Chilisa, 2012; Smith, 2012.

Figure 1 (Smith 1999, 117)

Dominant culture research and data methods and practices overwhelmingly rely on and value quantitative data to drive decision making. Dominant institutions develop strategies and approaches for engaging with communities that depend on the quantification of lived experiences, including their needs, challenges, and barriers. We refer to this over-reliance on numbers and statistical data as quantitative supremacy because other ways of knowing community experiences – through stories, narratives, art and other visual expressions – and learning from them are often subjugated, devalued, and considered "supplementary" data. While we recognize the importance of quantitative data, which are especially useful for understanding trends, our work centers research and data practices that qualify, rather than quantify, everyday lived experiences of communities of color.

This organizational assessment works to integrate qualitative data into decision making processes and to build capacity to collect, synthesize, and communicate communities of color's' stories and other community-led ways of understanding lived experiences. We firmly believe that these kinds of data speak more clearly to structural inequities as well as to the needs, solutions, and desires of communities.

Evaluation Limitations

As with all assessment and work there are limitations to the methods, resources and process of gathering and analyzing information, data, and stories. A few of the limitations are:

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- Changes in Leadership at State level - with the changing of the Governor as well as changes at DEQ leadership level, new expectations and priorities shifted.
- Lots of folks leaving DEQ and no easy or meaningful way to connect with former employees who might have valuable information to contribute.
- The impact of COVID, wildfires in Oregon, and isolation of the past few years is not just an important backdrop but a piece of texture and context which help to inform the realities in which the work is happening.
- Racial violence across Oregon, the US, and the world brings into sharp focus the ever present and urgent threats of violence toward Black, brown, and Indigenous folks and also the very different realities of individuals based on positionality.
- Confusion over roles - Internally within DEQ, new roles and committees, the departure of DEI Coordinator Natalie Nava, and strategic planning hiccups also contributed to data-gathering struggles.

Data Collection

ETC sought to be thorough and meticulous in understanding and assessing DEQ agency wide. In doing so, ETC reviewed historical documents, current trends, interviews and personal stories to compile this assessment, as well as initiated its own data collection efforts. ETC interviewed dozens of represented and non-represented employees as well as managers and members of the leadership team. ETC met with members of the DEI Council and some affinity group members. ETC analyzed previous surveys completed by the inter-affinity group and an internal DEQ survey completed in 2020. A list of the documents reviewed can be found in the appendices on the last page of this assessment. In addition, Human Resources provided a compilation of current statistics by region as well as agency wide, set forth below:

Northwest Region by Race

Race/Ethnicity	Total	
	Percent	Number
White	73.3%	85
Asian	6.0%	7
Hispanic or Latino	6.0%	7
Two or More Races	4.3%	5
Black or African American	0.9%	1
Do not wish to answer	9.5%	11
Total	**100.0%**	**116**

Western Region by Race

Race/Ethnicity	Total	
	Percent	Number
White	82.4%	98
Asian	5.0%	6
Hispanic or Latino	2.5%	3
Two or More Races		
Black or African American		
Do not wish to answer	6.7%	8
Total		

57

Race/Ethnicity	Total	
	Percent	Number
White (United States of America)	82.4%	98
I do not wish to answer. (United States of America)	6.7%	8
Asian (United States of America)	5.0%	6
Hispanic or Latino (United States of America)	2.5%	3
Two or More Races (United States of America)	1.7%	2
American Indian or Alaska Native (United States of America)	0.8%	1
Black or African American (United States of America)	0.8%	1
Total	100.0%	119

Eastern Region:

Race/Ethnicity	Total	
	Percent	Number
White (United States of America)	96.7%	59
Asian (United States of America)	1.6%	1
I do not wish to answer. (United States of America)	1.6%	1
Total	100.0%	61

Totals at DEQ by race:

Race/Ethnicity	Total	
	Percent	Number
White (United States of America)	73.0%	582
I do not wish to answer. (United States of America)	8.9%	71
Asian (United States of America)	7.5%	60
Two or More Races (United States of America)	3.6%	29
Hispanic or Latino (United States of America)	3.5%	28
Black or African American (United States of America)	2.4%	19
American Indian or Alaska Native (United States of America)	1.0%	8
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (United States of America)	0.4%	3
Total	100.0%	797

Employees with Reported Disabilities:

Disability Reporting	Total	
	Percent	Number
No Reported Disability	98.0%	781
Reported Disability	2.0%	16
Total	100.0%	797

Employees by Gender:

Gender (Binary Options)	Total	
	Percent	Number
Male	52.1%	415
Female	47.9%	382
Total	100.0%	797

58

Employees by Age:

Generation	Total	
	Percent	Number
Generation Z (1997 - Current)	2.1%	17
Millennials (1981 - 1996)	29.5%	235
Generation X (1965 - 1980)	43.0%	343
Baby Boomers (1947 - 1964)	25.1%	200
Traditionalists (1917 - 1946)	0.3%	2
Total	100.0%	797

Employees with Veteran Status:

Veteran Status	Total	
	Percent	Number
Not a Veteran	94.0%	749
Veteran	6.0%	48
Total	100.0%	797

Hires to State by Race/Ethnicity (2022-2023)

Race/Ethnicity	Total	
	Percent	Number
White (United States of America)	62.6%	82
Asian (United States of America)	13.7%	18
I do not wish to answer. (United States of America)	7.6%	10
Black or African American (United States of America)	3.8%	5
Two or More Races (United States of America)	3.8%	5
American Indian or Alaska Native (United States of America)	3.1%	4
Hispanic or Latino (United States of America)	3.1%	4
(Blank)	1.5%	2
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (United States of America)	0.8%	1
Total	100.0%	131

Separations from State by Race/Ethnicity (2022-2023)

Race/Ethnicity	Total	
	Percent	Number
White (United States of America)	70.9%	78
I do not wish to answer. (United States of America)	12.7%	14
Asian (United States of America)	5.5%	6
Black or African American (United States of America)	3.6%	4
American Indian or Alaska Native (United States of America)	2.7%	3
Two or More Races (United States of America)	1.8%	2
(Blank)	1.8%	2
Hispanic or Latino (United States of America)	0.9%	1
Total	100.0%	110

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Promotions from State by Race/Ethnicity (2022-2023)

Race/Ethnicity	Count
White (United States of America)	40
Hispanic or Latino (United States of America)	5
I do not wish to answer. (United States of America)	4
Black or African American (United States of America)	3
Asian (United States of America)	2
Two or More Races (United States of America)	2
(Blank)	1
Total	57

In addition to the statistics provided, HR advised that there is only one mandatory DEI training document for those who serve on interview panels, titled **Bias Awareness Training for Interview Panel Members**. The document focuses on biases with guidance on how to recognize one's own biases in hiring decisions but it does not explicitly mention race, only cultural differences. HR also advised that all employees during 2021 were required to complete an implicit bias training[18].

Trainings in Preparation for the Organizational Assessment

To lay a foundation for the Organizational Assessment, ETC provided training to the DEI Council and the DEQ leadership team on core anti-racism concepts. That foundation will allow those groups to receive findings and recommendations in a more integrated and embodied way and will help members communicate more clearly about this report to others at DEQ.

The hope and intended outcomes for the trainings were:

- Develop a shared, basic foundation (frameworks, language, understanding, skills, and practices) for transformational, anti-racist organizing within and through DEQ, and understand it based on social positionality, positioning within the institutional hierarchy, and specific job functions.

- Align with other key leaders in DEQ and develop skills to better align their departments with an overall vision and practice of transformational, anti-racist organizing.

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[18] Governor Tina Kotek issued a letter to all Oregon agency leaders expressing her commitment to Diversity Equity and Inclusion stating "Agencies are required to have a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan (DEI Plan), updated every two years. Agencies without a current DEI Plan must complete an initial plan by June 1, 2023."

- Become empowered to move departments toward transformational, anti-racist practices and outcomes based on an understanding of their roles within the agency and in accordance with Anti-Racist Principles and the Strategic Plan.

- Understand that the work is generative and iterative and living and evolving and should be evaluated regularly.

- Experience interconnection, health, wellbeing, arts, culture, mindfulness, and embodiment as fundamental aspects of transformational, anti-racist organizing.

- Offer transformational, anti-racist capacity-building content in an effort to embed practices throughout DEQ. Capacities developed included daily anti-racist practices, frameworks, and tools, to embed racial justice into leaders' roles at DEQ.

- Deepen the understanding of an anti-racist approach and hone collective ability to apply it.

- Anti-Racist Principles include:

    - Intent vs. impact
    - De-centering whiteness and centering voices of color
    - Understanding internalized supremacy and entitlement
    - Invisibl(ized) labor

Participants were also invited to attend optional racial affinity spaces for BIPOC folks within the training as small breakout spaces happened. Facilitators adapted and responded to events and the needs of participants.

Observational Analysis

After reviewing all the documents and interviews, ETC found several common themes that have contributed to the disconnect between DEQ's mission and values and its commitment to racial and social justice. First is **lack of transparency and accountability.** Staff stated that they felt like they were not on the same page as their managers, specifically on task-oriented goals. Several employees felt that expectations from managers and supervisors were not clear. This has led to feelings of distrust towards supervisors and managers. The observation that DEQ has different standards of conduct for managers and supervisors than staff was repeated. Employees also repeated that accountability around communication was lacking and that supervisors and managers had little to no accountability for not setting clear expectations. Similarly, interviewed staff express concerns of power hoarding by management, leading to unclear boundaries about who held power or why. Employees reported that the chain of command went upward but they were unclear about who had final say. They described a practice of passing responsibility to the

next person without clear understanding or delineation of who that was. The lack of transparency and accountability has festered, creating a dynamic that lacks trust, with staff feeling unappreciated and unable to feel heard or respected by their peers or management.

Second is **perfectionism,** which includes the belief there is **only one right way** to get something done. This can stem from adherence to what is written and not allowing a creative process to find new ways to address a situation. One way perfectionism was highlighted at DEQ was through the reliance on quantifiable data, to the exclusion of anecdotal evidence. Employees believed that issues would not be addressed by management unless measurable data was presented to prove a problem existed. ETC learned of several incidents in which BIPOC employees presented an alternative method for completing a task or approaching a problem and were either re-directed or reprimanded. In some cases, employees' white counterparts were praised for coming up with a comparable method. Many BIPOC employees found that their complaints about such incidents were not taken seriously and felt they were generally judged more harshly than their white peers. With no accountability present, many saw management do little to nothing because each incident was treated as an individual matter and not indicative of a larger pattern within DEQ. That approach has prevented the problem from being quantified and addressed by management.

The third theme is **defensiveness.** Many employees believe they cannot seek support for their concerns. When issues have been brought to management's attention, the response was often defensiveness and fragility, which sometimes turned into blaming the employee who made the complaint. Many stated they felt a fear of open conflict from management regarding microaggressions, along with the worry that one might say the wrong thing in a conversation and lead to further microaggressions. Overall, the framework of seeing issues as unique and not systemic has led to a breakdown of trust. Employees have experienced their concerns not be taken seriously and instead treated as a one-off incident by a rogue bad actor.

The fourth theme is **lack of support for BIPOC employees**. The grievance and complaint processes could use re-evaluation so that all at DEQ have a better understanding of remedies should they be needed. Many BIPOC employees stated that it was common to find at least one team member who was a common actor in microaggressions but because of seniority, there was an unspoken belief that they should be protected, even by the Union–narratives that undermine the relationship between represented employees and non. For example, if a senior employee is close to retirement, it would be seen as unfair to address any problem issues that could cause that employee to lose benefits. That has led BIPOC employees to bear the brunt of the lack of structural support. Further, BIPOC employees reported that they felt more managed through marginalization by being identified as problem employees for pushing back on a decision or asking critical questions. BIPOC employees reported feeling that they were held to a different standard than their white colleagues. BIPOC employees also stated that if they spoke up, they often did not receive follow-up because either nothing was done or the lack of transparency within DEQ led them to feel like their concerns were not being addressed. When DEQ took the step to

create the positions of DEI Coordinator and Analyst, many employees reported this as a positive step initially. In reality, those two positions were not well equipped to provide the level of support needed by the agency for DEI work. In addition, the roles and responsibilities of those positions were not clearly defined, in fact, at times creating direct conflict with other agency actors.

The fifth theme is isolation and is exacerbated by the **siloed nature of DEQ's structure.** Three distinct geographic regions containing separate programs that run autonomously, lends itself to employees feeling isolated. The structure has led to various complexities that inhibit trust-building within teams, programs, and the Union. A general sense of "us versus them" was common in interviews with employees. Many felt a lack of trust between management and non-management staff. Non-supervisory management staff may (where many BIPOC management are employed) also become excluded from ongoing conversations around improving DEQ. Employees of all levels, especially BIPOC employees, did not feel valued at the same level as their peers. A two-tier system for employees and management was identified various times as a hindrance to creating a true accountability structure. For example, many employees experienced isolation after attempting to address issues or microaggressions only to be shut down by the only person capable of taking any action.

Power at DEQ

At its core, an organizational assessment must examine the role of power within an institution.   There is no simple all-encompassing definition of the word power, but in an attempt to find a shared working definition of power, reflect on the following:

> The study of any form of oppression is first and foremost, the study of POWER.

The study of anti-racism and anti-oppression is first and foremost the study of power. It is the ability to accomplish something or act in a certain manner. In a work setting, power includes the ability to make decisions, set deadlines, allocate work, delegate, recruit and promote people, disagree or say no ***without fear*** *of personal repercussions, and* ***access*** *others in power through networks. Power is not just individual, but* ***cultural.*** *Power is relational and* ***can shift*** *in different contexts. Whiteness, wealth, citizenship, and education are some of the mechanisms through which certain groups can have more power. Power can be used intentionally both in negative ways and positive ways,*

> **"Power without Love is reckless and abusive - Love without Power is anemic and weak."**
>
> Martin Luther King Jr.

*and individuals within a culture may **benefit from power they are unaware of.**[19]*

The study of oppression in any form requires first and foremost a closer look at the role of power. We must also separate individual power from systemic or institutional power. On a macro level, DEQ has power through its role as a government agency within Oregon's executive branch. On a micro level, DEQ, as with many workplaces, exercises power which stems from two different sources: 1) Power related to a job title as it fits within an hierarchical organizational chart; and 2) Power related to the individual components of our identities.

EQUITY NEEDS

RE-EVALUATION OF POWER DYNAMICS

"…power differentials in the workplace as a barrier to having conversations around race. Management vs non management as an example. There needs to be trust. This is hard if you have tried in the past and the issues aren't addressed or you don't feel like you were listened to."

"I also feel like I need to see and believe that our managers have committed to…getting whatever structured support they need to start walking the talk and building back the trust with BIPOC staff rather than just saying that they care."

"I need trust in the power structures of DEQ: management, equity workgroup, and less visible types of power like interpersonal relationships."

"Management that is able to reflect on their actions and be able to understand that regardless of their intent, they need to be able to hear how another person may have experienced their action."

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[19] Sources: Intergroup Resources and the CARED Collective (Calgary Anti-Racism Education)

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Power Related to Job Title and Function

Power within the DEQ hierarchical organizational chart follows a fairly predictable flow. It primarily rests at the top of the agency and flows down to varying levels of responsibility (to regional directors, heads of divisions and so forth–think of a pyramid shape). This top-down style of organization has benefits, as it is designed to resist decision-making paralysis, uniformly coordinate policy and consistently respond to needs and stimuli. This style of organization may also create unintended consequences and issues throughout the organization. A top-down organizational structure limits its effectiveness as the top of the structure becomes increasingly more monolithic in thinking. When some voices are not present in (or excluded from–see section on *TRANSPARENCY*) the top of the power structure, so is the expertise, creativity and potential contributions emerging from these voices. Over time, a top-down structure also creates a high likelihood of siloing within the agency as regions and divisions create an internal hierarchical process that mimics the organizational hierarchy. As a result, power settles in familiar job titles and functions, and with identities that have historically and currently been empowered through systemic and institutional oppression of marginalized identities.

Power Related to Identity

Often overlooked is the way in which we, as individual human beings, hold power in relation to the way society places greater value and importance on certain parts of our social identities. Positionality is the way in which pieces of our identity influence and bias our worldview.

Before reading on, take a moment to practice finding your own positionality. Look at the rainbow colored pie chart below (credit to Sylvia Duckworth and Tessa Watkins). For each of the 18 sample identity categories (i.e, citizenship, skin color, education) locate yourself on the category pie slice by placing a

mark on each slice. The more marks you have near the center of the chart, the more access you have to societal power related to your positionality. The more marks you have on the outside edge of the charge, the less access to power related to your positionality (marginalized).

Once you have located yourself on this chart, consider the following: Using the 'Physical Ability' slice as an example, imagine yourself physically on top of one of the pie slices as if there is a giant chart on the ground and your body represents a mark on that slice. No matter where you place yourself, your back is to the outside of the chart so that you always have visibility towards the center (power) of the chart. **This illustrates an incredibly important concept about power—the further you are from the center/concentration of power the greater the likelihood that you can understand how power is operating since you have greater visibility of power across multiple positionalities.** If you are on the marginalized (i.e., visibly disabled) edge of a slice, it is highly probable you understand how power works in that part of your positionality because society is not designed with your (i.e., visibly disabled) needs in mind. Because of the additional burdens, you must therefore work extra hard to get your (i.e., visibly disabled) needs met, which requires a comprehensive understanding of how power interferes with that process.

Thinking about organizational and positionality power inevitably creates some complex questions around the intersections of the different types of power. In the data collection/research phase of this organizational assessment, many of those interviewed spoke to the following chart. Take a moment to explore…

IF YOU HAVE...	MORE ORGANIZATIONAL POWER	LESS ORGANIZATIONAL POWER
MORE POSITIONAL POWER	You are regularly viewed and expected to be the expert. Many will defer to you and you may find you have to work harder to explore opinions and ideas that are contrary to yours. Regardless of your intention, you represent yourself AND the organization in your presence and actions.	You may still find yourself included in spaces normally reserved for those with more organizational power. There are fewer barriers to advancement within the organization. You may misread others' frustrations with power as a deficiency in their merit.
LESS POSITIONAL POWER	You may need to be diligent about ensuring that your leadership skill, style and expertise isn't (un)intentionally undermined (or skipped over) by colleagues AND those you supervise. At some point, you may have to grapple with reaching an artificial 'ceiling' of advancement that exists within the organization.	You likely contribute a lot of invisible labor (see section on INVISIBLE LABOR) to the organization in marginalized parts of your identities. You have a greater likelihood of feeling the lasting effects/harms of persistent microaggressions and are at risk of burning out.

Consider the following questions for reflection:

1. If you hold organizational power and a significant amount of positional power, how will you uncover what's missing from your worldview/perspective?
2. In what ways might DEQ be different if leadership was composed mainly of individuals who hold much less positional power?
3. How might you support those with lesser positional power if you have more positional power? How might you support those with lesser organizational power if you have more organizational power?
4. If you have less positional power, have you explored how that impacts your work at DEQ?
5. How do each of these quadrants relate to another quadrant (i.e., how do interactions between people with more organizational power, but less positional power play out with those who have less organizational power, but more positional power)?
6. Instead of figuring out how to individually shift between quadrants, how does DEQ change the constraints of the current structure (see 'POWER RECOMMENDATIONS" below)?

How is Power Impacting DEQ?

Power is always one of the most important components to unpack in an organizational assessment. Below are several different examples of how power, unexplored, highlights conflict and disharmony. Some of these examples primarily demonstrate individual components of power and some of the examples primarily demonstrate DEQ-institutional components of power. Regardless, the multitude of ways in which power is exercised are connected. The examples demonstrate the tip of the iceberg and give us reason to go below the surface to explore what's underneath. But before going through the examples, explore the following infographic:

For societal norms to change we must acknowledge how race and power work. When we *understand how power shows up* we can begin to shift it. Here are some simple things you can begin to understand to notice how power works in everyday life:

1. **Who is speaking** – Start paying attention to who speaks at meetings, in conversations, etc. What are the racial, gender, ability, and other marginalized dynamics?
2. **Decision making power**—Do those most affected and folks of color have decision making control? Do they need to seek final approval from a governing body?
3. **Access to Resources**—Access to networks, materials, financial resources, information, etc. What steps are taking place to redistribute these privileges?
4. **Disengage**—The power to disengage from uncomfortable conversations or work is an important form of power. Impacted communities cannot walk away from unsafe or uncomfortable situations, yet those with power can often abandon projects, strategies, and programs.

The examples are taken directly from ETC's observations and interviews with DEQ employees, but some information may be changed to protect anonymity.

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Example #1:

A manager of color, Louis, notices that whenever he and staff he supervises introduce themselves with educational titles (degrees earned) at meetings that those on his team without the same level of education as others in the room are likely to shrink away from the conversation even if they have relevant and important information to share with the group. Louis decides to make it a practice to no longer share his own educational achievement in his introduction and instead shares something about how his day is going (i.e.; "My name is Louis and I am feeling really energized today").

What's happening here? The manager is attempting to remove some of the power in the group dynamic by no longer sharing his own educational attainment during introductions. He's noticed that the sharing of educational background in introductions implies that society (and DEQ) greatly values education in ways that may exclude some people on his team from participating. Educational attainment is certainly important, but in this case, if the mere sharing of college degrees leads to withdrawal from the meeting, are they worth mentioning? Recall the 'Education' slice of the positionality wheel above.

After a few months of this practice, Louis notices that more folks on his staff feel an increased confidence in participating and sharing important information throughout the meeting as opposed to relying on Louis to do all of the talking and presenting. As such, staff feel more visibility in their work and more connected to projects. However, Louis is also noticing an unintended consequence that he is feeling individually. Others in the meeting, who are not on Louis's team, still share their educational achievements as part of their introductions. As a result, Louis can feel a shift in how others in those meetings may make negative assumptions about his knowledge and expertise because his educational attainment is no longer intentionally being revealed.

What's happening here? Louis made an important adjustment to increase visibility of his team members during meetings, BUT this was not a systemic change in practice, just an individual short-term remedy. As a result, he lessened the outward appearance of his 'organizational power' while his 'positionality power' remained the same. He may now have to untangle how DEQ's use of educational attainment in introductions has been used as a shortcut (thus potentially activating an individual's 'IMPLICIT BIAS') by some to identify who is deemed to be capable and who is deemed to not be.

Consider the following questions for reflection:

1.   Where have you felt similar shortcuts being used at DEQ?
2.   Does this example help you see the connection between positional and organizational power better? If not, do you have a colleague who can help you explore this connection?

Example #2:

Excerpts from the letter (Foundational Challenges of the DEI Coordinator Role) from the former DEQ DEI Coordinator upon her resignation from the agency:

"The DEI Coordinator position is currently not designed to have power or authority over agency DEI matters. The Coordinator has no team, no budget, is not a manager and is not the final decision-maker on DEI issues or projects at the agency. Although the DEI Coordinator is expected to serve as an issue area expert, recommendations provided by the DEI Coordinator have been largely ignored or dismissed. Without formal power and authority, the DEI Coordinator cannot fulfill the current expectations of the role.

There are two competing expectations of the role of the DEI Coordinator: 1) be the lead on DEI projects at the agency and 2) facilitate the DEI Council in leading DEI initiatives at the agency...the DEI Council believe that they are accountable for the actions of the DEI Council and DEI Coordinator, however Leadership expects the DEI Coordinator to be accountable.

The DEI Coordinator currently reports to the agency Director."

Notice here how a lack of clarity on roles and responsibilities creates confusion and the potential for groups to grasp for power in ways that ultimately prevent coordinated efforts for organizational change. Each entity involved here, the DEI Coordinator, DEI Council, Leadership Team and Director may have very different expectations on how to advance DEI efforts. This conflict further exacerbates frustration and mistrust (see section on 'TRUST') at DEQ making it harder for people to safely and thoroughly feel capable of participating in organizational change at DEQ.

Consider the following questions for reflection:

1.   What do you feel when you do not have any self-determination in your own work?

2. What do you need (consider your own access to power) to have safe and productive conversations around power as it exists at DEQ?

Example #3:

In late March of 2023, media reported that the former DEQ Director resigned in September 2022, months before his scheduled retirement, due to a relationship with an employee he directly supervised.[20]

Instances like these create significant distrust of leadership and agency processes (revisit the Organizational/Positionality quadrant on page 65). The distrust will exist internally and externally as people reflect on the machinations of DEQ. Significant and legitimate questions may exist for an indeterminate amount of time.
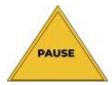
Consider the following questions:

1. How might attempts to hide the relationship have compromised decision making at the highest levels of DEQ?
2. How might my previous interactions with those involved in (or knowledge of) the relationship been (unbeknownst to me) unfairly influenced?
3. Even if I had no direct interactions with those involved in (or those with knowledge of) the relationship, how does this foster a lack of trust in DEQ leadership as a whole?
4. Do I feel that subsequent actions taken by DEQ (i.e., individual consequences, hiring, policy decisions) helped re-establish trust at DEQ?

Example #4:

Oregon is a very large geographical area and as a state agency, DEQ is responsible for environmental regulations and safety throughout Oregon. Oregon's geographical diversity also means that there is plenty of diversity in community, thought and expectations from the people living within. As an organization, DEQ is sectioned into regional and divisional entities that have their own subculture and processes reflective of the regions they are in. The East Region will take on a different structure than DEQ Headquarters in Portland. A byproduct of this stratification is that work can become siloed in those regional/program divisions. Siloed work at DEQ is also vulnerable to creating power-related issues. Systemic power struggles are likely to occur frequently in this structure.

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[20]https://www.oregonlive.com/environment/2023/03/oregons-environmental-agency-said-its-leader-quit-early-for-personal-reasons-he-was-actually-forced-out.html

When an organization is siloed, the ongoing isolation limits diversity of thought and experience over time. As a result there is a continuous decay in the ability to problem-solve as siloed parts of the organization operate in the 'that's how we've always done it' posture. In order to understand the 'we don't know what we don't know' problems that exist, we must find ways to break down silos. If we don't break down those silos, familiar power patterns and practices win the day.
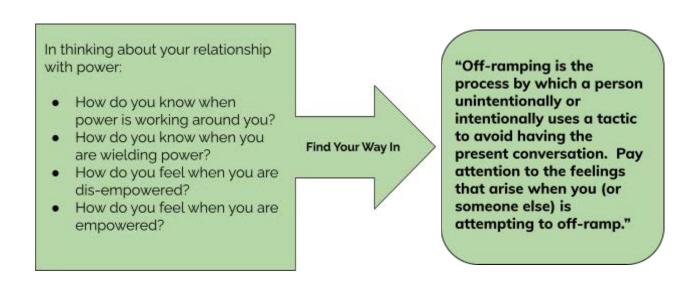
Consider the following questions:

1. What conflicts arise when processes aren't in alignment across regions?
2. If multiple conflicting approaches arise, how should DEQ move forward?
3. As DEQ considers its role in anti-racism and anti-oppression what does it mean when there are pockets of resistance to that effort?
4. How does siloed work create inefficiencies? Where do you experience the inefficiencies that result from siloed work?

In thinking about your relationship with power:

- How do you know when power is working around you?
- How do you know when you are wielding power?
- How do you feel when you are dis-empowered?
- How do you feel when you are empowered?

Find Your Way In

"Off-ramping is the process by which a person unintentionally or intentionally uses a tactic to avoid having the present conversation. Pay attention to the feelings that arise when you (or someone else) is attempting to off-ramp."

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As a final exercise in this section, look at the following chart, and reflect on where you see examples of each at DEQ.

POWER OVER	POWER WITH
(Repression, force, coercion)	(Collaboration, solidarity and collective strength)
POWER OF	**POWER WITHIN**
(The potential for every person to find agency and self-determination in their work)	(Self-worth, resiliency, growth and internal understanding)
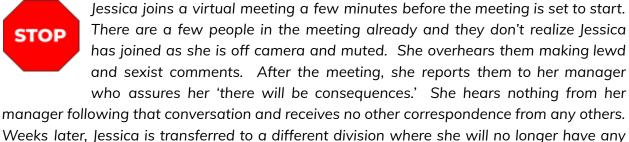
Transparency at DEQ

Anti-racism and equity work must be done out in the open. In order for equity efforts to take hold, they must be visible to those who have historically been harmed. The visibility also serves as a check on power so that those who have been harmed are able to voice concerns and ideas for organizational change and development. The action of making equity efforts visible becomes a large component of how anti-racism and equity efforts are communicated to the rest of the organization.

Transparency protects honesty and truthfulness within an organization. Examine the following chart for a roadmap of this section of the organizational assessment.

WHERE ARE WE HEADED WITHOUT TRANSPARENCY?

LACK OF TRANSPARENCY	DISTRUST	INFLEXIBILITY	MISSING ACCOUNTABILITY	UNHEALTHY CONFLICT
DEQ has a tendency to operate in **silos**. Without intentional efforts to communicate, work becomes territorial and misaligned. It becomes easy to create **narratives** to explain what we can't see.	**Narratives** may be used as a protective mechanism. They may also unintentionally create further distance between groups. In the distance between groups, it becomes easy to feel **distrust**.	When we feel **distrust** in our work, connections & relationships suffer. The less connected we are, the easier it is to lose **accountability** & rely on familiar (white-centered) problem solving approaches.	An organization that is missing **accountability** highlights how power leads to malfunction. The misuse of power validates narratives, interrupts innovation, and make it easy to find ourselves in **unhealthy conflict**.	The heavy presence of **unhealthy conflict** is an unsustainable way for an organization to operate. It also leaves those with marginalized identities vulnerable and subject to multiple **harms**.

etc...

An organization moving towards anti-racism and greater equity efforts needs transparency from individuals *and* from the organization itself. Individuals demonstrate transparency through openness and honesty about their individual growth and self-reflection. Organizations demonstrate transparency by creating policy and making decisions with as much visibility as possible.

STOP *Jessica joins a virtual meeting a few minutes before the meeting is set to start. There are a few people in the meeting already and they don't realize Jessica has joined as she is off camera and muted. She overhears them making lewd and sexist comments. After the meeting, she reports them to her manager who assures her 'there will be consequences.' She hears nothing from her manager following that conversation and receives no other correspondence from any others. Weeks later, Jessica is transferred to a different division where she will no longer have any interactions with the colleagues who made the sexist comments. She asks her manager if she was forced to transfer as retribution for her complaint.*

In the scenario above, it is possible that the timing of her transfer was a coincidence in that she was transferred shortly after making her complaint, but without any insight that would have been offered through a transparent process, the justifiable narrative she will create

that is connected to her transfer fits the circumstances. She may assume (and may be right) that she was transferred as retribution for her complaint. At this point, she is left to guess.

Consider the following for reflection:

1. What could Jessica's manager have done to create more transparency?
2. If the organization has a practice of keeping these types of incidents in the dark, what may happen if Jessica happens to encounter a colleague who has had a similar experience?
3. What harm exists for Jessica beyond overhearing the lewd and sexist remarks?

Throughout the organizational assessment process many narratives have surfaced regarding the ways in which DEQ operates. As time moves on, those who carry narratives (like Jessica in the scenario) may seek stories that validate their narrative in an effort to make better sense of their circumstances.

In the scenario above, because Jessica wasn't afforded any insight into the resolution process and doesn't trust that her transfer is unrelated she holds a narrative that she is experiencing retribution (whether she is or not is immaterial at this point). Because she has some uncertainty about what is happening, she may seek out opinions and experiences of others that validate her experiences. She may need to seek out an echo chamber to process her experience of retaliation with the understanding that there was no accountability process and consequences for her colleagues that would have potentially allowed her space to heal.

In an **echo chamber**, people encounter opinions or beliefs that only coincide with their own. Siloing is likely to follow.

Echo chambers are most likely to come into existence when people are in spaces with others who share similar beliefs and opinions. There is nothing wrong with seeking space with others who have similar experiences–those spaces become problematic echo chambers when those within the chamber have lost the ability to explore nuance and other perspectives. In this case, it is not Jessica that has created the echo chamber, but the organization that has limited transparency that has done so.

Consider the intersection of power and transparency. A lack of transparency in leadership and management spaces has a different feel to it than a lack of transparency at lower levels

of an organizational structure because it is still possible for leadership and management to make impactful decisions and policies while under cover. The more that policy, personnel or other decisions are made under cover, the more likely that people will create narratives as to why those decisions are being made. Those decisions may or may not be consistent with what others are experiencing.. Equity cannot exist in that uncertainty.

> There may be instances when transparency is hard to provide (i.e., confidential personnel matters). In those cases, it's important that people understand the necessity for a lack of transparency.

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A lack of transparency also occurs when parts of an organization become siloed. Since DEQ is organized by division and regions, there is ample opportunity for each of those divisions and regions to begin to create their own subcultures. Add to this the large geographic size of Oregon and it becomes easier to see how different DEQ divisions and regions across the state develop their own ways of doing things. In some ways, this type of siloing seems like a natural outcome based on the organizational structure. But siloing can lead to divergent outcomes for initiatives, the stalling of creativity, and even more echo-chambering. To prevent the siloing from having a deleterious effect, DEQ should create new ways of exchanging information across silos. Having multi-disciplinary teams across divisions and regions that meet regularly to discuss issues, concerns, policies, strengths and opportunities is good practice for organizations seeking greater internal visibility. As DEQ's equity and anti-racism work spreads, it is incredibly important that it has in place a multidisciplinary

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[21] As a thought exercise, think of how unsettling it would be to be in a well-lit house in an isolated forest at night. The house is made almost entirely of windows and anyone (or anything) could see inside the house while you are unable to see into the dark outside the house. It is easy in that vulnerable state to create narratives about what may be peering in on you. You may find that your only solution is to turn off the lights inside the house as an attempt to control visibility–you may think to yourself, 'if I'm unable to see, no one should be able to see'. A lack of transparency and visibility leads only to more invisibility.

team from all levels of the organization that are committed to and capable of high-level anti-racist, anti-oppression, and equity practice across board.

Transparency is the first step to a more truthful and honest process, and truthfulness is mandatory for equity and anti-racism efforts. It is incredibly important that organizations moving towards equity have a standard ethos of 'showing their work.'[22] Recall being a math student. It is likely that at some point, you had a teacher that required you to show your work in the margins.   In those instances, the process was more important than the answer.   The same exists here as DEQ moves towards being a more equitable and anti-racist organization. There are several things that showing your work does:

1. It demonstrates evidence of the thought process (the 'why' behind decisions).
2. It gives us greater ability to course-correct should we get an undesirable outcome (easier to spot the mistakes in the thought process) because it's easier to see where we went wrong.
3. It requires us to go step-by-step (prevents us from rushing to just try and get the 'right answer').
4. It models a practice of truth-telling.

If an organization has significant issues with transparency, individuals within the organization will begin to lose trust over time. The narratives that take hold and become entrenched will paint a picture of an organization that may not be entirely reflective of the true state of the organization. The narratives and siloing start to foster distrust within an organization. When distrust takes hold, relationships and connections with one another suffer.

There are several examples that demonstrate how distrust is present at DEQ:

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[22] Why do math teachers insist on students showing their work?

1.   Delayed or incomplete communication from leadership when issues arise leave many unsure that the issues can be resolved. BIPOC staff compiled data and wrote a letter[23] to DEQ leadership in August of 2021. The letter detailed some of the real harms BIPOC staff were experiencing (i.e. discrimination, unclear performance measures, common fatigue and strain) and listed several recommendations for DEQ leadership to improve many of these circumstances.   Throughout the organizational assessment data collection process, we heard from many DEQ staff who felt the former director's response was inadequate and also didn't lead to requisite action that would resolve some of the issues BIPOC staff were experiencing. DEQ leadership is currently in the process of crafting a response and a plan to resolve some of the ongoing issues, yet the length of time it's taken to provide a proper response adds to the distrust.

2.   Any group, committee, council and/or team et al. in a distrusting environment is susceptible to replicate and recreate that distrust within their own group, committee, council or team because it may feel like a protective factor needed to 'play the game'. If a group is distrustful of leadership, how does it keep a necessary line of communication open with leadership in order to get institutional support in achieving its objectives and directives? There are several examples of groups, committees, councils, or teams trying (often out of protective necessity) to keep their internal workings and decision-making entirely

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[23] "BIPOC Letter' can be found in DEQ internal database.

confidential because of the distrust that exists at DEQ. Anti-racism and equity work requires transparency, so extra efforts for confidentiality (even if warranted) interfere with that work.

3.   Feedback from many individuals noted that DEQ has a pattern of speaking performatively about anti-racism and equity efforts. We gain trust with others when our words and our actions are in alignment.

 This footnote[24] links to a short (two question) survey where you can lend your ideas for a better future version of DEQ. Your answers will live with others who choose to complete the survey as well. Your answers are anonymous unless you choose to share your name and your answers will be kept with the ETC team. But, please keep in mind that in the future, should DEQ still use the organizational assessment and no longer be working with Engage to Change, this form may link directly to DEQ staff and/or leadership.

Accountability at DEQ

If DEQ is unable to begin the process of creating better visibility and transparency, it will be increasingly harder to create health accountability measures across the agency.

Before getting into the details of accountability as it relates to DEQ, we must first have a greater understanding of what accountability means in an anti-racist, equitable sense. Most often, we think about accountability as something that is needed after mistakes are made—we think of accountability as punishment or consequences. But that is only a small slice of the accountability spectrum. Accountability falls on a spectrum of action and can exist before harm is done, it can exist in the midst of harm, and it can exist after harm occurs. Accountability is not only a consequence or punitive, even though sometimes accountability requires those things but it is also proactive and responsive (to note, ETC received feedback suggesting that DEQ struggles holding 'bad actors' accountable for their actions, making proactive accountability nearly impossible). To understand the full spectrum of accountability, we must take inventory and action on how we shape the world we want to be in. Accountability has both individual and collective components and can only be fully described in community and relationship with those nearby. This means that DEQ is still in

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[24] https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf4ubLhw2eXz7P-QEQ1aqvoTSUaBnwOWuQ8uVXB5xJm62rO1Q/viewform?pli=1

the process of determining its accountability practices in its DEI work and this assessment is an initial tool to aid in DEQ's determination. Consider the following quote from Mia Mingus.[25]

ACCOUNTABILITY

"Proactively taking accountability for our actions is an important way we can build trust with the people in our lives. It is a practice that demonstrates our character, integrity, capacity for self-reflection, and the kinds of values that we are committed to. It is a practice of interdependence, a way to care for those we love and ourselves, and shows that we have done our own internal work to take responsibility for our actions." – **Mia Mingus**

etc...

Consider the following for reflection:

1. What does 'proactive accountability' mean to you?

2. How is practicing transparency a form of proactive accountability?
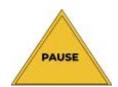
Imagine you and several colleagues are preparing to share some recent environmental findings with local community members of color. Although you and your colleagues have only worked at DEQ for three years, your findings demonstrate 10 years of environmental improvements in this particular community. You and your colleagues have worked on the project for the last 18 months and are proud of the work you have done.

[25] Mia Mingus is a queer, physically disabled Korean transracial and transnational adoptee raised in the Caribbean. Mia Mingus is a writer, educator and trainer for transformative justice and disability justice.

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During the community meeting, you are shocked to learn that many of the community members are incredibly upset about DEQ's policy decisions over the last 20 years and are wholly uninterested in looking at your team's findings. Instead they want an explanation about decades old policies and decisions that negatively impacted the community. As the community members get more and more upset, you feel your heart starting to race and your blood pressure rising.

In this scenario, community members have carried some frustration and angst with DEQ for quite some time due to the history of interaction with the agency. You weren't even a DEQ employee at the time some of the harm in the community began, but as an employee of DEQ, the community sees you as part of the organization and thus responsible for responding to the community's frustrations.

1. What may happen if you respond with defensiveness?

2. What if you try to ignore the community's complaints and just focus on your findings?

If there was a practice of proactive accountability in this scenario, the community meeting could have gone much better than it did. Here, proactive accountability first requires an understanding of the history of DEQ's interactions in that community. As a representative of DEQ, it is important to know how DEQ is viewed whenever you interact with the community. Whether or not you have any direct knowledge of the harm, or whether you were even employed by DEQ at the time of the harm) is immaterial. Second, is developing an individual practice of proactive accountability in connection with understanding DEQ history in that community.   If DEQ had a practice to better understand its own history (see 'recommendations'), whenever there was a community interaction, DEQ employees would have greater context to the ways in which community members might respond. In this case, *individual* proactive accountability asks you to better understand how <u>you</u> may react to being on the receiving end of the community's frustration. If you are able to temper any defensiveness or anger that may result from feeling 'unfairly' held responsible, you create much more space for the community members to feel heard–which in turn is a step towards accountability from the community's perspective (revisit the Mia Mingus quote above).

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EQUITY NEEDS

RESILIENCE, VULNERABILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

"I need to be with folks I have not experienced white fragility and defensiveness from before. When I am with people I have experienced defensiveness from, I am not as comfortable discussing racism."

"I need to know that if something inappropriate gets communicated it is being addressed, even if perhaps it occurs outside the main group."

"...tools/framing on how to bring up race in a conversation/meeting/forum that is not seen as disrespectful or patronizing...tips to approach someone, admit mistakes, and reset conversation/relationship."

Proactive accountability in anti-racism and equity work also requires a commitment to ongoing education. All of DEQ, from an individual and institutional perspective, must practice 'learning out loud' in space for non-dominant culture, voices and learning. Learning out loud is the intersection of committing to anti-racism and anti-oppression growth and education as it intersects with proactive accountability. Another way to think about 'learning out loud' is 'showing your work.'

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PAUSE   Consider the following for reflection:

> Those at the center of the harm are also the people nearest to solutions to fix that harm. Their voices and experiences must be at the center of any future reimagining.

1. Why is 'showing your work' or 'learning out loud' important for you?
2. Does your anti-racism learning exist primarily in the work space?
   a. If so, how might you begin learning out loud outside of work?
   b. If you are learning out loud outside of work already, how is that learning connected to your positionality ('see chart on page 67)?

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[26] Those of us who were educated in the American school system can likely recall learning out loud in early grades, but as you progressed in your education, it is likely that learning out loud became less of a priority. Can you think of reasons that may be?

Accountability as a Consequence

The intention of anti-racism, anti-oppression and equity work within DEQ is to create an organization that is more hospitable and connected to the needs of all human beings with the understanding that those who experience marginalization have been harmed by the current systems that center whiteness. Because of that harm, systems must center the voices and experiences of those harmed as they have vision and insight into the future changes needed. As DEQ practices learning out loud as an institution, there will be some at DEQ who will resist that learning. We currently exist in a world where the echo chambers racism and oppression have convinced many that these problems many marginalized populations face are fabricated or a result of those groups inadequacies. There will be times when the resistance from those that feel this way is so strong that they are unwilling to explore and shift their worldviews.   In those moments, accountability may require consequences.

During the initial meeting of a new policy planning team, a manager states, "[T}his quote-end-quote anti-racism conversation is fine and all, but when are we going to talk about the actual work we have to do? I, for one, don't want to waste a lot of time in this conversation. In fact, if this team is going to make it harder on my division to get their work done, my only choice is to instruct them to just put their head down and do it the way they've always done it."

At this moment, punitive consequences may not be necessary. There may be opportunities for growth, learning and understanding. But what happens if the manager follows up on his comment and instructs his division to actively resist the policy team's decisions related to equity work. What happens then?

There is no checklist of consequences to choose from that will address every situation. As DEQ culture shifts towards equity and anti-racism work, those that resist that effort may naturally feel pushed out of the organization instead of the folks who are being pushed out by inequitable practices. That is a predictable consequence of this type of shift. Still others will resist while remaining in the organization.   Any punitive consequences must be consistent with core anti-racism principles (see ETC philosophy on page 13) and require courage, humility and honesty at all levels of DEQ.

Accountability as a Post-Mortem

Healthy accountability processes require ongoing reflection and course correction. We learn from our experiences, our mistakes and our successes. Our history will always teach us when we are willing to listen. A reflective process shows us what we may not be recognizing (i.e. excessive invisible labor, microaggressions, misuse of power, etc.)and how we may be able to create more visibility (read: transparency) around our growth. A transparent, reflective process is also a check on power. It becomes part of the process of 'showing our work.'

Recall the earlier scenario with the community meeting (on page 80). There were 20 years of opportunities for accountability and reflection which never occurred. In the absence of that effort, the community narrative around its interactions with DEQ grew and were validated by ongoing negative interactions and experiences. If at any stage, DEQ had practiced reflective accountability, there could have been an opportunity to create genuine connection, relationship and accountability between DEQ and the community. Instead, we have to imagine how the environmental findings at present do NOT take into account the frustrations and angst of the community, which, for those in the community, invalidates them.

But it's not too late! Accountability requires us to do the next right thing.

Consider the following for reflection:

1. What needs to happen in order for the community to feel heard by DEQ in this scenario?
2. How might an earlier post-mortem have led to different findings from the team?
3. It is clearer here how inattention to equity work can create significant inefficiencies. What potential inefficiencies exist here?

Part of a healthy accountability process requires us to do the next right thing, even when that is challenging or makes us uncomfortable.

If the next right thing happens in the above scenario, it may mean that the findings your team worked so hard on need to be scrapped and re-evaluated with the community's experience more centered (data and information may be

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missing because of a poor relationship with a community, or there may be unseen impacts felt but not recognized). Repair and restoration with the community may take quite some time to untangle and understand decades of hard feelings within the community.

Should an organization get to a place where accountability is significantly absent in the workplace, unhealthy conflict is certain to be present. There is no organization that is immune from conflict, so the goal is to be in an organization where healthy conflict is present.

STOP

Consider the following for reflection:

Think about an unhealthy conflict you've had in your life (in a personal or professional relationship).

1. What feelings exist connected to that conflict?
2. Was there ever closure to that conflict? If so, what did closure entail? If not, what was the result of that non-closure?
3. People that have conflict with the systemic forces that create oppression against parts of their identities (i.e. sexism creates conflict for women and female-identifying people; ableism creates conflicts for people with disabilities) are often thrust into unhealthy conflict regularly. What are the consequences for being in that unhealthy conflict?

> Those with marginalized identities are left incredibly vulnerable to harm in organizations that have unhealthy conflict or avoid it altogether.

Contrary to the belief of some, in order to address the harms created by racism, sexism, ableism we actually have to have a conversation about those things. So often, organizations attempt to avoid these conversations because they are incredibly challenging and uncomfortable to have. But the presence of unhealthy conflict is the most significant piece of evidence that shows that an organization is not yet prepared for advanced anti-racism and equity growth and development. Fortunately, this is not a complicated equation to solve–the end result of creating more transparency, trust, flexibility and accountability is healthier conflict. DEQ, like any other organization with real equity goals, needs continued practice with healthy conflict.

Environmental Justice at DEQ

Environmental justice and racial justice are inextricably linked. Any organization tasked with maintaining and fostering a sustainably healthy environment for all must understand the direct connection between the two. Should that prove to be a controversial statement at DEQ, equity work may remain unreachable and forever off limits.

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Currently, there are folks leading DEQ's environmental justice efforts but without the institutional backing needed to fully address the significance of environmental issues that are on the horizon. Environmental justice work at DEQ needs more visibility and support. This footnote[27] links to a video so you can hear from Ayana Johnson, founder of the not-for-profit Ocean Collective, on the connection of climate and environmental justice with racial justice.

One of the reasons environmental justice is somewhat invisible at DEQ may be as simple as understanding the core function and origins of DEQ. The DEQ began as a comprehensive agency in the late 1960s to help comply with state and federal environmental laws and policies. The connection between environmental justice and racial justice was not nearly as extensively studied and considered at that time.[28] But since the late 60s, federal and state laws have not kept pace with worldwide activism, resulting in the ever increasing danger of unchecked climate change and the direct impacts of environmental hazards in communities of color. The relative invisibility of environmental justice at a governmental level (as compared to community activism level) puts this asynchronous pace on immediate display. As a regulatory agency, some may even view DEQ as needing to be completely disconnected from environmental justice work and activism and more consistent with supporting business growth and development. That leaves DEQ with significant high-level questions to answer regarding its ongoing mission and willingness to shift towards a more just organization centered around environmental justice work. In fact, the Engage to Change team believes that it is a threshold question that must be answered before deciding whether or not DEQ can become a more anti-racist and equitable organization.

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[27] https://youtu.be/AIknk6S2Ttc

[28] There is hope hidden in this statement. Understanding the connection of environmental and racial justice now demonstrates how civil and human rights have changed and grown since the time DEQ was formed. Although progress may not move at the speed we want it to, it must always be moving in the *direction* we want it to.

'Environmental quality' and 'environmental justice' are not synonymous in our world.   But where do these two overlap?   Where do they not?   If environmental justice and racial justice are intertwined, how might we inadvertently recreate the scenario on page 80, where DEQ displays that it is missing accountability within certain communities?

To understand our work as it relates to environmental justice, we also have to have a better understanding of racial justice. This footnote[29] links to an article on the direct intersection of redlining[30] and air pollution for a great example of this intersection. DEQ must explore systemic racism as it exists across Oregon even when the direct connection between other institutions and DEQ's work is not immediately visible to or understood by all DEQ employees.[31]

Systemic racism is discrimination against people of color that exists within multiple institutions (i.e. healthcare, education, housing, environmental protections, etc.)

Consider Audre Lorde's words again, "[T]here is no such thing as a single-issue struggle, because we do not live single-issue lives." The following is an example of how not understanding or seeking the connections between environmental justice and racism can perpetuate or create different harms.

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[29] https://www.npr.org/2022/03/10/1085882933/redlining-pollution-racism
[30] Racial discrimination that prevents Black (and other people of color) homebuyers from accessing loans and inventory to purposely keep those same home buyers from certain communities.
[31] To be clear, many people of color deeply understand these intersections because the negative impacts are widely felt in communities of color, and to find any success at all requires knowledge and intuition of how to overcome these negative impacts.

Also consider the following example: *Many stores across the country still offer paper receipts at checkout. Think about how wasteful it feels to get a paper receipt that is 15 inches long for a singular item you purchased at the grocery store. As such, there has been a lot of effort by environmentalists to eliminate paper receipts in the checkout line in order to cut down on the wastefulness of paper receipts heading to landfills and the trees cut down to create them.*[32] *But without an understanding of anti-racism, all of that effort may miss something incredibly important. Many people of color, especially Black folks, know the experience and humiliation of being overly scrutinized and surveilled while shopping. Just google 'shopping while Black' to immediately find dozens and dozens of articles that outline racial profiling at stores. Here is the important takeaway–for people of color, a receipt is not only a proof of purchase necessary to return unwanted items, it is also a ticket to leave the store with hopes of less unwarranted scrutiny and harassment by store security. Although eliminating paper receipts is great for solving an environmental problem, it may exacerbate an existing racial problem if racism is not considered in how a store may cut down on waste. Environmental justice and racial justice must always be linked.*

ETC's examination of current structures revealed that there are many (people of color in particular) working at DEQ on environmental justice issues. In order to make that work more meaningful and sustainable, there must be more deliberate intention, visibility, and resources in that area.

Resistance

As state-wide organizations begin to expand their understanding of equity it is certain that in many states (especially those as geographically expansive as Oregon), many people within those organizations will resist the change and cultural shift that anti-oppression/equity work requires. To be candid–we live in a country that has a long history of dependence on racial injustice. For some at DEQ, it is unlikely that their worldviews will ever shift. If racism and other forms of oppression make up part of the waters we *all* swim in, those that feel least impacted by those forms of

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[32] Tell Retailers to Skip the Slip and Ditch Toxic Paper Receipts | Green America

oppression are most likely to swim with the current. Those more heavily impacted spend more time swimming against the current. And on one hand, those swimming with the current become comfortable with the aid of the flow of the river as it rarely impedes their movement but instead supports their movement, while those who spend more time swimming against the current build the muscle memory and resilience necessary to continue swimming even when the waters

Those with marginalized identities have always felt the challenges of 'swimming upstream.'

are rough. This leads to a fundamental realization–multiple people can have very different experiences of the same environment.

STOP Consider the following: *Chris and her colleagues are asked to attend an in-person division meeting near the Oregon-Idaho border. Chris requests an exemption to the 'in-person' part of the meeting and wants to appear by video conference. Billie, her supervisor, tells her, "Unless you or a loved one are sick or expecting a baby, it's pretty much required that you be there. C'mon, be a team player–besides, it's hard to move up in this agency if you don't get face time with people."*

What Billie doesn't recognize here is that Chris's reluctance to attend the 'in-person' meeting is due to her experiences as a queer woman. Recently, multiple states have passed anti-LGBTQ+2IA legislation that are direct attempts to limit LGBTQ+2IA civil rights.[33] Chris has been to that area recently and felt very uncomfortable about the imagery, messages and interactions that she's had with people who support the states that are passing this type of legislation.

PAUSE This is also a good example of invisible labor. If Chris chooses not to go to the meeting, she will likely have to explain her reasoning for attending virtually. She risks the need to share personal and intimate information with her supervisor (who may or may not be supportive) while explaining her reasoning. She may also, as suggested by Billie, miss out on future opportunities by not attending. Should she feel compelled to go, she is inserting herself into an environment that may harbor hostility for her very existence. Whether she attends in person or not, it will require additional emotional labor just for Chris to do her job–and her colleagues and supervisor may not recognize or appreciate that extra labor.

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[33] Anti-LGBTQ+2IA Bills in 2022 - Human Rights Campaign (hrc.org)

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> **Invisible labor** is the extra (uncompensated, unrewarded) work people with marginalized identities contribute to an organization around the oppression they experience connected to those same identities. Like all labor, it is of direct benefit to the organization. **Invisiblized labor** is invisible labor that is *purposefully* made invisible by the organization or others that directly benefit from that work.

If Billie is understanding of how some environments may directly impact LGBTQ+2IA colleagues, she may anticipate that Chris might experience challenges that others on the team won't experience. As such, she may be able to proactively support Chris by making some arrangements that make it easier for Chris to be present (either in-person or virtually). At the very least, a supportive supervisor would have responded much differently to Chris's exemption request by leaning into some curiosity as to why Chris may be uncomfortable in attending in person.

EQUITY NEEDS

BRAVERY PLUS HUMILITY

"...it is okay to be afraid, especially of offending someone, with your honest answers, when talking about race. More of an acknowledgement that we are all learning as we grow together."
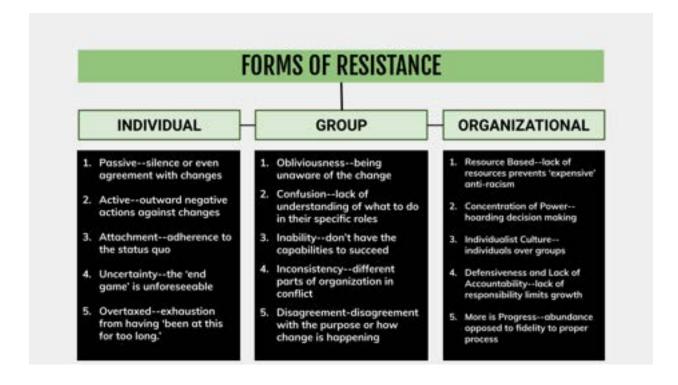
"...work on being less fearful of judgement. Having social anxiety keeps me in the background of conversations in larger groups. For this reason, I really enjoy the smaller breakout rooms."

"I am uncomfortable bringing up race as a non person of color for fear of making a mistake or hurting someone's feelings."

Questions for reflection:

1. If your initial thought is along the lines of 'sometimes you have to do hard things' or 'it's just part of the job requirements, if she can't do that, she should look for another job,' how might your response be influenced if you 'swim with the current?'

2. BUT, don't forget about positionality. Perhaps you had those initial thoughts because you have practiced 'swimming against the current' because of your marginalized identities and have developed a practice for yourself of dealing with marginalization. How do you support others 'swimming against the current' while you yourself are 'swimming against the current' too?

Resistance to anti-racism and equity work has always been present in society and as a result in our workplaces. There are many different forms of resistance that appear.

Examine the chart above. In each category (individual, group and organizational), you'll find different forms of resistance. As an example, sometimes an individual may resist change passively. That person may express agreement with a new policy or change, but not commit any action towards that change. As another example, sometimes a group may experience so much inconsistency throughout an organization that the group may resist a new policy or change because the organization has a history of 'false starts.' And an organization as a

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whole can be resistant to change because it has an over-concentration of power at the highest level and there is no room for change to be led at the staff level.

In a state-wide organization as large as DEQ, encountering resistance is inevitable. Plenty of time, energy and resources could be spent on responding to resistance, but that may not be the best use of that effort. Instead, organizations must begin the long process of culture change that is designed to begin shaping the organization DEQ wishes to become. Consider the following quote from Walidah Imarisha (educator, writer, poet, scholar) on the principles of visionary change towards justice:

> "[C]hange comes from the bottom up not the top down; change is collective, communal, decentralized; change focuses on people and is relational; change centers the leadership of those who have been marginalized, and centers the leadership of those who live at the intersections of identities and oppressions."

In considering resistance, we must also consider who will feel the resistance most acutely. So often in equity work, those on the front lines committing to the effort also receive the bulk of the pushback. It is an unfair, but predictable, proposition that those who experience oppression end up being the responsible parties for resolving the oppression.

Consider for reflection:
1. Should someone who has a disability be responsible for resolving the marginalization related to their disability that comes from the environment that person works in?

2. If your answer is **yes**, how much invisible labor must that person contribute?

3. If your answer is **no**, why is it that this so frequently happens when it shouldn't?

If equity work is led from the bottom up in an hierarchical chart, what happens when the resistance comes from a person's manager? Chris goes to explain her reasoning and reluctance to attending the in-person meeting and tell Billie that she will not attend in person, but will attend and contribute virtually. Billie responds by stating, "I can't make you attend, but you do realize that I'll have to make a note of your insubordination in your personnel file, right? Sorry, but I can't give you special treatment."

All resistance is not created equal. Resistance to oppression is not the same as resistance to equity work. The former moves us to more just and equitable structures while the latter is designed to keep an oppressive status quo in place.

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Billie may not recognize it ('swimming with the stream'), but Billie is resisting exploring what could be a more equitable process. All accommodations and exemptions may not always be possible, but here, there is no exploration as to what might support Chris in the moment. Additionally, Chris now feels a threat of retribution or immediate consequence if she doesn't appear in person. So now we have a situation where Chris may feel forced to attend in person out of fear of the potential consequences of not attending. And keep in mind it is important for people to attend meetings, but there <u>are</u> allowable exemptions. Billie stated that earlier ("Unless you or a loved one are sick or expecting a baby...") in her comments to Chris. Here, Billie, and by extension through Billie's institutional power as manager, the organization, have made it clear that some exceptions are reasonable, but limiting one's exposure to the harms and traumas of oppression is unreasonable.

Also consider that Chris's resistance to attending the in-person meeting may be understood by some lacking anti-oppression analysis as insubordination or defiance, but Chris may be expressing resistance to inequitable practices that exist throughout the organization. As a result, Chris may also be resisting on behalf of other colleagues similarly situated throughout the organization. And that resistance to inequitable practices benefits all across the agency whether they experience homophobia, racism, ableism, ageism, or sexism and so forth.

The above scenario helps us better understand how and why a lack of diversity in positionality, identity and experience at the management level can create issues in an organization. If management primarily consists of those that 'swim with the stream,'–and it is true that at DEQ there are disproportionately few managers that represent marginalized identities– it is more likely that scenarios like Chris's arise frequently.

STOP Consider the following statement found in several survey responses throughout DEQ: "[M]any staff in lower levels of the workplace hierarchy have an advanced understanding of anti-racist concepts while a lack of understanding is common among higher-level leaders."

1. If you are a manager or leader at DEQ, what immediate feelings arise as you read the above statement?

2. If you are not in a management position, what immediate feelings arise as you read the above statement?

3. In your opinion, how far in the DEQ hierarchy can one go without an advanced understanding of anti-racism and equity work?

4. In your opinion, how far in the DEQ hierarchy can one go without an advanced understanding of the technical components of one's work?

5. Which seems easier to learn and commit action towards: growing anti-racism/equity understanding or technical understanding?

6. What might DEQ look/feel like if everyone at the top of the DEQ hierarchy had advanced understanding of anti-racism/equity work <u>and</u> the technical components of one's work?

DEQ's ability to shift towards becoming an anti-racist, equity-focused organization will hinge on its commitment to values and action consistent with anti-racism and equity principles. This is not a short and predictable journey and.DEQ won't be able to overcome all of the resistance it will experience overnight. Even with dedicated and consistent action, it will take a long time for a new anti-racism and equitable approach to gain a foothold. In the meantime, DEQ employees can continue to support DEQ's equity effort through a concerted practice of solidarity.

Resistance at the Mid-Managerial Level
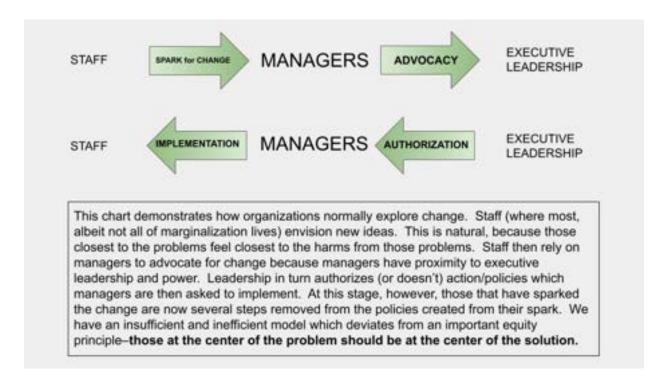
First and foremost, this section is not meant to absolve executive leadership of responsibility and accountability for equity and anti-racism work. At the same time, mid-managers play a unique and influential role in advancing organizational anti-racism and equity work when they are positioned in between those at the staff level and those at the executive leadership level. The spark for change often begins at the bottom of the organizational chart, but there is rarely much access to institutional power for those at the bottom of the organizational chart.

Look at the chart below. Managers, by nature of their position within the organization, are the bridge between staff and executive leadership. They are responsible for advocating for and supporting staff as well as implementing high level policies and practices instituted by leadership.

1. What happens when staff needs and concerns are 'lost in translation' from managers to executive leadership?

2. How does this model stymie progress when managers are uninterested or resistant to change?

3. What is different if staff, managers and executive leadership are all involved in the spark, advocacy, authorization and implementation? What challenges might arise (hint: don't forget about the role of power)?

This chart demonstrates how organizations normally explore change. Staff (where most, albeit not all of marginalization lives) envision new ideas. This is natural, because those closest to the problems feel closest to the harms from those problems. Staff then rely on managers to advocate for change because managers have proximity to executive leadership and power. Leadership in turn authorizes (or doesn't) action/policies which managers are then asked to implement. At this stage, however, those that have sparked the change are now several steps removed from the policies created from their spark. We have an insufficient and inefficient model which deviates from an important equity principle—**those at the center of the problem should be at the center of the solution.**

Organizations must resource managers to implement change actions/policies (which may include money, time, education, and/or other resources) if managers are currently ineffective in leading change. Organizations also have an opportunity here to rethink hiring practices. It is a rare practice in many governmental organizations that managers are hired due to their anti-racism and anti-oppression expertise and skill set (with the exception of doing so in the DEI departments) being the primary consideration. If equity work is to indeed become the centerpiece of all work, it follows that all who are hired have demonstrated competency in equity work or at the very least show a sincere desire and commitment to doing the hard work to become increasingly more proficient and confident in learning. Another opportunity exists here as well. Organizations attempting to lead with a committed focus on equity work are likely doing so because there are people in the organization already carrying that labor on behalf of the organization. Identifying who is doing that labor, where in the organization it's happening and prioritizing the ability to do equity work to make it a more

prominent consideration in identifying talented candidates helps an organization begin to identify better practices of promoting from within.

Active resistance to anti-racism, anti-oppression and equity work at the managerial level is a significant impediment to an organization's overall growth and evolution. Wherever DEQ encounters resistance at the managerial level, there will need to be transparent and consistent practice of accountability to push through managerial resistance and support the growth of employees that those managers supervise. This also means that those at the staff level need a mechanism to provide feedback to leadership on both managerial progress and on the other hand managerial resistance.

In regards to DEQ's anti-racism and equity work, DEQ has managers willing to lean into DEQ's equity efforts (with some already doing so). DEQ also has both ineffective and resistant managers. It is impossible to know how many managers fall into which categories, but the ETC team heard from many DEQ employees who have individual and anecdotal experiences with managers of all categories.

The Role of Human Resources

The Human Resources (HR) Department in any state agency must be a key focus of any antiracism/equity work. Tasked with locating, hiring, onboarding, resourcing, training, supervising, supporting, and terminating employees as well as making sure that rules and regulations at a variety of levels are understood and followed is a large undertaking and one that has historically been associated with maintaining and enforcing dominant culture expectations and rules.

From what requirements are necessary for a position, to where a position is publicized to who is considered qualified, to what questions are asked of candidates, HR is often the very first place that folks engage with DEQ. When employees need support or clarification about their roles and responsibilities, when they need to address concerns with other employees, when they need to take time for themselves or their families and when they have decided to move on from DEQ, HR is the place that they turn to.

And, not surprisingly, HR is often the place that thinks of itself as the furthest away from the need to engage with anti-racism and equity principles. HR departments often believe that there is little flexibility in how they do their job, little opportunity for reflection of anti-racism

principles, and candidly often little willingness to do self reflection and be curious and creative around how to help change office culture towards equity.

In many state agencies including at DEQ, Human Resources function less as a division dedicated to the cultivation and support of humans who work at DEQ and more as a protection mechanism for the state agency as it navigates the necessity of having humans do a large part of the work for the agency.

The extent of being able to identify the problems within an agency also depends in some part on how HR is able to understand the concerns. In a 2020 report done by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM[34]) found, in a survey of 2,500 HR US professionals in the US, found that 49% of Black HR professionals believe that race or ethnicity based discrimination exists in their workplaces as opposed to only 13% of white HR professionals. The same report showed that 35% of Black HR professionals believed that such racial discrimination exists in their workplaces compared with only 7% of white professionals.

One of the problems found by the study (and also consistent with the survey ETC conducted of folks at DEQ around issues of race and racism is around availability and comfort during conversations around race. From the SHRM study, the vast majority of organizations (67%) had not asked their employees about their opinions, concerns, or needs about racial injustice. 45% of Black workers and 30% of white workers said their workplace actively discouraged such discussions. Only 1 in 10 agencies had HR managers gather to discuss thoughts from workers around race-related issues.

Lastly, almost half (almost 47%) of Black HR professionals surveyed said they don't feel safe voicing their opinions about racial justice issues at the workplace as compared with 28% of white HR professionals.

Consider the following scenario (and ignore technical issues about the law itself):

Mabel takes 12 weeks of pregnancy disability leave prior to giving birth. After giving birth, Mabel requests an additional 40 weeks (52 total) of leave to bond with her new child and to recover from ongoing complications existing from a medical procedure done during delivery. Mabel gets an email from HR saying that she is only eligible for an additional 24 weeks of Oregon FMLA leave as per

[34]https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/trends-and-forecasting/research-and-surveys/documents/tfaw%20the%20journey%20to%20equity%20and%20inclusion.pdf

Oregon law. While Oregon law does indeed say Mabel is only eligible for 36 weeks of leave (as opposed to the 52 weeks she is seeking).

1. How might denying Mabel's leave request harm the relationship between DEQ and its employees?

2. Is there a possibility HR can agree to Mabel's leave plan?

3. If HR can't get to 'yes', how do we create a process that exhausts all efforts to try?

4. What are some of the potential long-term racial implications of HR's decision?

Reimagining HR

When anti-racism and equity concerns are raised in the context of human resources, the first (and often main) solution offered is to hire "a more diverse workforce" which functionally means to hire more Black and brown employees. This, as a starting place, is a misguided goal. If DEQ does not have a proportionate or representative or reflective group of folks of color who have applied and been hired to work at DEQ, the problem does not likely lie in recruitment. It means that the culture of DEQ is not one that supports and retains folks of color. Instead of bringing more folks into an environment that will likely burn them out, expose them to microaggressions and harm, and which expects their presence to resolve long-standing equity issues, HR should first explore and examine the institutional culture of DEQ.

A few areas that can (and should) be examined through in and through HR are:
● Examine the invisible(ized) and unequal labor expectations and work done by folks of color through the agency. (See page 92 for a further discussion of invisible labor.
● Address the pay inequities[35][36] between folks of color and white folks as well as the hidden factors that contribute to lack of advancement opportunities for marginalized people.
● Retention and support for folks at DEQ engaged in anti-racism and equity practices. People who are doing work from the margins to change the culture of DEQ are likely

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[35] Advisory Report on Equal Pay: Oregon Must do More to Close Persistent Wage Gaps for Women and People of Color in State Government
[36] Secretary of State report finds pay inequities persist in state pay despite equity law, raises – Oregon Capital Chronicle

experiencing burnout and fatigue from having multiple roles without recognition, compensation or the support they need. Finding ways to actively support folks can greatly reduce some of the causes of folks leaving DEQ.

- Focus on efforts that support all of an employee's needs in the workplace that are centered and rooted in valuing the complexity and humanness of each person. Instead of rules and regulations being the guiding principle, center the efforts of HR on cultivating, celebrating and supporting the humans who make up DEQ now and in the future.
- Redefine how success is measured and what is rewarded.
- Work with other equity groups and contractors to develop a system of accountability that provides resources and also expectations around all of DEQ staff engaging with and struggling towards DEQ's equity goals. Just like you would not be okay with an employee deciding not to use the new software or billing system, treat DEQ's anti-racism and equity goals as requirements for individuals at DEQ to work towards understanding and implementing in their worksites.
- Value experiential and oral stories and experiences as much as data collection about issues of race and equity
- In hiring and promoting decisions, critically analyze what might actually be required (and what isn't) for each position. Remove barriers (like unnecessary degrees or certifications) if they aren't actually required.
- Be intentional and transparent about hiring panels, questions, and recruitment.
- Evaluate performance review systems for likelihood of baked in and tolerated biases based on race that get passed off as opinion without critical reflection or challenging
- Be on top of and honest about discipline and adverse employee actions that reinforce dominant culture norms, punish forms of communication that are not centered on white comfort, and be way or "professionalism" and "subordination" as racialized code words.
- When considering hiring of candidates, consider the ways in which "colorblind" alternatives to mainstream job applications do not accomplish the goals of equity. In a 2016 study by Harvard Business School[37], showed that folks of color who "whitened" their resumes got significantly more callbacks for job interviews than those who did not. 25% of Black candidates who "whitened" their resumes received call backs as opposed to only 10% of Black candidates who didn't. 21% of Asian American candidates got calls back when they whitened their resumes as opposed to only 11.55 who got calls back when they left racial identification in their resumes.

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[37] http://www-2.rotman.utoronto.ca/facbios/file/Whitening%20MS%20R2%20Accepted.pdf

These are a very small sampling of ideas and areas that could use some thought and engagement and action from a human resources perspective. Human Resources has the capacity to be the active heart of DEQ, refreshing the resources from decisions and people who need support, access and enlivening as well as providing a steady stream of lifegiving and equity informed practitioners as DEQ seeks to embed anti-racism throughout its divisions and job descriptions. There is a large world of creative possibilities for HR if the curiosity and will is there to help imagine a new DEQ.

Solidarity

Practicing solidarity in anti-racism and anti-oppression work has always been a significant part of an overall strategy to dismantle oppressive spaces and structures. Historically, civil rights movements have required participation from those across a multitude of marginalized identities.[38]

Those that have power are able to influence, create and direct societal and in DEQ's case organizational norms. But those norms may not authentically and adequately serve people within the organization who don't culturally or naturally subscribe to those same norms. At DEQ, ETC sees a lot of evidence that those norms are heavily connected to whiteness.

ETC understands that the definition of 'whiteness' in the green box on the following page is going to stir up a lot of feelings and emotions for many who may be unaccustomed to this definition. We must take a moment to unpack this. Before reading any further, take inventory of what somatic (physical) responses arise in your body as you read the definition of whiteness–those somatic responses may provide clues and insight as to how you may show up in conversations about race. It is important to note that people of color can still subscribe to the idea of whiteness in whole or in part, (even though they may or may not benefit from it)

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[38] Dr. King on economic justice: https://time.com/5783976/martin-luther-king-jr-economic-justice/
Solidarity between Asian and Black Americans:
https://www.npr.org/2021/04/02/983925014/the-history-of-solidarity-between-asian-and-black-americans
Why we must understand disability rights and LGBTQ+2IA rights in concert:
https://digitalcommons.wcl.american.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1785&context=jgspl#:~:text=intersect%20and%20join%20these%20communities%20is%20the%20vulnerability,policy%20solutions%20that%20can%20reduce%20discrimination%20and%20oppression.10

> **Whiteness is the way in which white people, their customs, cultures and beliefs operate as the standard by which all other groups of people are compared and/or judged.**

<u>and</u> white people can reject whiteness as the standard by which everyone should be compared and/or judged.

Consider Dr. Tema Okun's fifteen characteristics on whiteness in the organizational space,[39] and the counter-approach to each, by exploring the following:

      1.   **Perfectionism**, such as pointing out how a person or their work is inadequate. **INSTEAD,** expect that everyone will make mistakes and that mistakes offer opportunities for learning.

2.   **Sense of Urgency**, such as prioritizing quick or highly visible results that can exclude potential allies. **INSTEAD,** discuss what it means to set goals of inclusivity and diversity, particularly in terms of timing.

3.   **Defensiveness**, such as spending energy trying to protect power or defend against charges of racism. **INSTEAD,** work on your own defensiveness and understand the link between defensiveness and fear.

4.   **Valuing Quantity Over Quality**, such as directing organizational resources toward measurable goals. **INSTEAD,** develop a values statement which expresses the ways in which you want to work, and make sure it is a living document that people apply to their daily work.

5.   **Worshiping the Written Word**, such as valuing strong documentation and writing skills. **INSTEAD,** work to recognize the contributions and skills that every person brings to the organization which *may* include writing.

6.   **Believing in Only One Right Way**, such as concluding something is wrong with people who refuse to adapt or change. **INSTEAD,** never assume that you or your organization know what's best.

7.   **Paternalism**, such as decision-making processes that are only understood by those with power and unclear to those without it. **INSTEAD,** include people who are affected by decisions in decision-making.

8.   **Either/or Thinking**, such as trying to simplify complex things. **INSTEAD,** slow down, encourage people to do a deeper analysis, and sense that things can be both/and.

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[39] https://rrapp.hks.harvard.edu/the-culture-of-white-supremacy-in-organizations/

9.   **Power Hoarding**, such as feeling threatened when anyone suggests organizational changes. **INSTEAD,** understand that change is inevitable and that challenges can be both healthy and productive.

10.   **Fear of Open Conflict**, such as equating the raising of difficult issues with being rude or impolite. **INSTEAD,** be open to countering ideas and opinions and don't require those who raise difficult issues to do so in 'acceptable' ways, particularly if you're using the ways in which issues are raised as an excuse not to address them.

11.   **Individualism**, such as wanting individual recognition and credit. **INSTEAD,** make sure credit is given to everyone who participates, not just the leaders.

12.   **Believing I'm the Only One**, such as thinking that if something is going to get done right, then 'I' have to do it. **INSTEAD,** evaluate people based on their ability to delegate to others.

13.   **Believing Progress means Bigger and More**, such as defining success as hiring more staff, developing more projects, or serving more people. **INSTEAD,** make sure your goals speak to how you want to work, not just what you want to do.

14.   **Only including Objectivity**, such as considering emotions to be irrational and destructive to decision-making. **INSTEAD,** push yourself to sit with discomfort when people express themselves in unfamiliar ways.

15.   **Claiming a Right to Comfort**, such as scapegoating those who cause emotional or psychological discomfort. **INSTEAD,** welcome discomfort as much as you can and understand that it is the root of all growth and learning.

Throughout the organizational assessment process, ETC heard many people across the agency share stories and reflections of each of these characteristics interfering with their work. At the beginning of the change process, it can be challenging to an organization to shift away from these because they made up the status quo for a long time <u>and</u> for some, that status quo has felt like 'swimming with the stream.'

Questions for Reflection:

1. Which of the fifteen characteristics do you see occurring most frequently in your work with DEQ?

2. Which of these characteristics have you adopted for *yourself* in your own experiences?

3. How might the combination of some of these characteristics (for example, 'a sense of urgency' and 'believing in only one right way') create additional complications and challenges that each one doesn't do on it's own?

EQUITY NEEDS

HOLDING SPACE FOR DISCOMFORT

"I also want to address my comfort level in myself leaning into the challenges of the conversations and situations—all of this comes back to gaining confidence and leaning into vulnerability."

"I want to figure out how to have discussions about race in the workplace without causing stress for my colleagues of color."

"Part of that is my responsibility……to not let myself get discouraged, to remember that people of color don't get to throw up their hands and opt out."
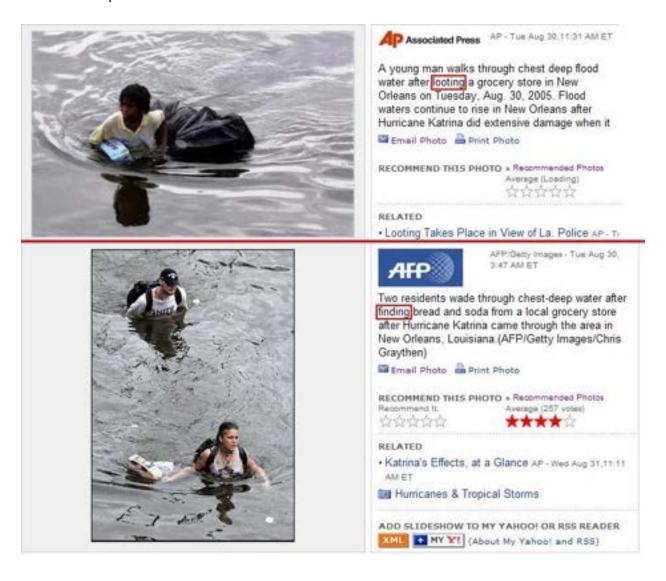
Back to Solidarity. Oppression thrives when it can pit oppressed groups against each other. One of the most significant tactics in pitting oppressed groups against each other is the specter of a 'finite pie' or 'scarcity of resources.' If organizations convince marginalized groups that the time, energy and resources necessary to solve the injustices in an organization are limited, then the organization has also introduced an unhealthy sense of competition for those resources. We also see here #11 above ('individualism') at play, as it relates to individual groups. Anti-racism efforts must move towards collectivism by rejecting the 'scarcity of resources' conundrum. This is not to create another falsehood by saying that resources are unlimited, but it does mean the competition for the resources that exist should be accessed collectively.   Here, we must introduce a new term. anti-Blackness. Anti-Blackness is a form of racism that targets and dehumanizes Black people, culture and institutions specifically. It largely exists because historically, Black people have been the easiest people for society to dehumanize. Some of those historical examples include:

-   The lingering systemic consequences of Oregon being founded as a white-only state.
-   Richard Nixon's 'Southern Strategy' which created a substantial white voting bloc united around anti-Black racism;
-   Media's swift characterization of unarmed Black people killed by police as deviant or overly culpable in their deaths juxtaposed with the media's willingness to explore the

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humanity and traumas of white mass shooters (Tamir Rice, a 12 year-old Black boy killed by police for having a toy gun is described as a 'young man'; while James Holmes, a 25 year-old white man who shot dozens in a Colorado movie theater described as a typical kid)[40];

- Previous penalties for the possession of crack cocaine (viewed as a drug 'Black people use') vs. cocaine (viewed as a drug 'white people use') were 100 times harsher for crack cocaine users than cocaine users.[41]

Examine the picture below. What does this tell us about anti-Blackness?

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[40] http://www.forharriet.com/2015/03/tamir-rice-reminds-us-of-how-america.html
[41] https://www.reuters.com/world/us/us-house-passes-bill-end-disparities-crack-cocaine-sentences-2021-09-28/

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Because anti-Blackness has leveled Black people with the harshest societal penalties in every measurable outcome (healthcare access, education achievement, incarceration rates, homeownership levels, etc.), we can't talk about any anti-racism or equity work without having an in depth understanding and analysis of how anti-Blackness may operate in ourselves (yes, given the way in which racism poisons everyone from the inside-out, anti-Blackness can live in Black people as well), our families, our communities, our organizations and our institutions.

As DEQ continues to grow solidarity across the organization–supporting and resourcing affinity groups is already underway–creating space for conversations around how groups with specific focuses lend their energy to a common and greater cause of creating a more equitable DEQ. But when those spaces are under-supported and under-resourced, they become spaces where people only have an opportunity to vent–there is no support offered by the organization that fosters their ability for affinity groups to heal and grow. Their under-resourced and under-supported nature asks too much of the members. Affinity spaces that are only used for venting don't allow room for creativity and growth and create the recipe for inherited bitterness–the venting creates more venting. Anti-racism, regardless of the group or the purpose for its convening, must become a core function of its work and just as importantly be properly resourced.

Recruitment and Retention

For employees who experience and notice marginalization and isolation at DEQ, the request by the agency to recruit BIPOC folks may feel incongruent with their values of building community and caretaking others. In other words, if folks feel harmed by their work

environment or notice BIPOC co-workers being harmed, to ask them to recruit others, especially BIPOC recruits, creates a serious moral dilemma. Recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce has a significant 'chicken or the egg' problem when an organization has disproportionately few numbers of diverse employees (as DEQ does) and the work environment needs improvement (which is also true for DEQ). Here is the problem: often, marginalized groups are required to endure work environments that are unhealthy (i.e., lots of microaggressions, sexual harassment, inadequate support for physical or neuro divergence). In the midst of that endurance, the same people are tasked with trying to bring more diversity into that environment. It is morally untenable to bring in individuals to endure that space, so then the focus turns to improving the space–which in turn then requires those same few individuals to offer even more labor to try and improve the environment itself. This is a path to burnout–and a difficult sell to marginalized employment candidates seeking healthy employment.

Another important issue regarding DEQ's recruitment and retention efforts is the fact that it is a state-wide agency with significant geographic breadth. Depending on which geographic region of Oregon one is in, there may be wide cultural and political differences. There are some parts of Oregon that may feel unsafe to those with marginalized identities (if this statement aggravates you try and locate why that feels aggravating). In the same way geographic regions may be less welcoming, there may be divisions within DEQ that are less welcoming than others. This all becomes part of the challenge of recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce. But before DEQ brings in more diversity, it must first look to improve the environment for the marginalized people already employed.

The Recruitment and Retention Committee was recently formed to address issues related to attracting talented people to DEQ and supporting staff after onboarding. Without adequate support in place to create a truly equitable workplace, the task of the Recruitment and Retention Committee may be stymied by DEQ's current culture. They will need ongoing time and resources to creatively think about ways in which DEQ's upcoming equity efforts can help shift the environment towards a more healthy and hospitable workplace.

How Do We Take Care of Each Other?

This Organizational Assessment will help DEQ begin the process of collective visioning. The Assessment itself offers some direction and guidance, but the work of implementing that will
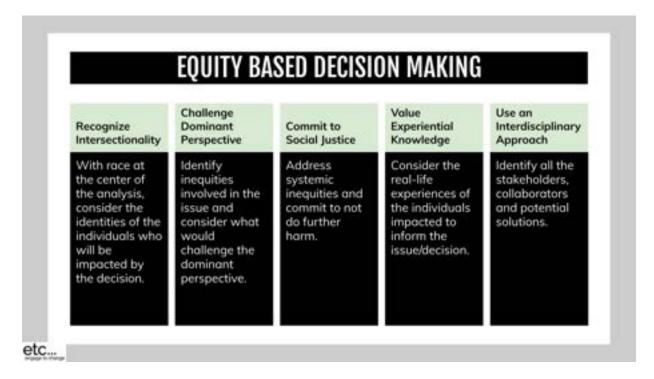
fall to all at DEQ. Below are three helpful inquiry based charts (centered on equity, anti-racism, and anti-oppression work) that can be good initial steps for guiding DEQ's work throughout the agency. If you are reading this document and don't know where to start in your systemic work (note: systemic work is different from individual work), begin here. These questions are important ones for DEQ to work through–answering them in groups will likely prove helpful in helping DEQ create long-term, sustainable anti-racism and equity values.

For practice, think about an upcoming policy decision you may be working on–it can be an IT project, an HR policy, a legislative budget, whatever. Then, run those ideas through these inquiry slides to see what answers surface.

EQUITY BASED DECISION MAKING

Recognize Intersectionality	Challenge Dominant Perspective	Commit to Social Justice	Value Experiential Knowledge	Use an Interdisciplinary Approach
With race at the center of the analysis, consider the identities of the individuals who will be impacted by the decision.	Identify inequities involved in the issue and consider what would challenge the dominant perspective.	Address systemic inequities and commit to not do further harm.	Consider the real-life experiences of the individuals impacted to inform the issue/decision.	Identify all the stakeholders, collaborators and potential solutions.

etc...

KAI CHENG THOM'S LOVING JUSTICE INQUIRY

IS IT HONEST?	IS IT BRAVE?	IS IT KIND?	IS IT HUMBLE?
★ Has the whole story been told? ★ Are conflicts of interest and power dynamics declared and neutralized? ★ Are commitments and responsibilities to self and others carried appropriately? ★ Is there adequate transparency? ★ Is the action clearly justified by circumstances and evidence?	★ Has personal responsibility for the action been taken? ★ Does the action take a stand against systemic oppression and harmful power dynamics? ★ Does the action face up to the actor's personal fears, insecurities and mistakes?	★ Does the action demonstrate attention to the needs and safety of self and other(s)? ★ Does the action invite and support positive change, rather than further harm or punishment? ★ Has there been respect for the inherent dignity and rights of all involved?	★ Has there been sufficient self reflection prior to, during and after the action? ★ Is there openness to the possibility of error? ★ Is there willingness for correction of mistakes? ★ Is the feeling of the action demonstrating humility? ★ Is there openness to clearly discussing and justifying action taken?

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ANTI-RACISM ETHICS OF CARE

ATTENTIVENESS	RESPONSIBILITY	COMPETENCE	RESPONSIVENESS	SOLIDARITY
How do we recognize the needs of others? How much energy do we drain from those most harmed when we are inattentive? What does it feel like when your needs aren't recognized?	Who is responsible for our anti-racism/ equity work? Who is obligated to do it? Is that distribution of labor just? What does irresponsibility in anti-racism work lead to for you?	How do we continue our education and growth? When does ignorance for anti-racism/ equity work become unacceptable? What can you do to push yourself to grow?	How do those needing care receive that care? Are efforts to care for others centered around their needs? Are there parameters there? What do you feel when you haven't been responsive?	How do we do this work together... especially when we are all starting from different places? Where is there a sense of community? How do you feel when you work successfully in a team?

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[42] Kai Cheng Thom is a non-binary trans woman who has organized thoughts of transformative justice around accountability

DEQ Microaggression Plan

A **microaggression** is a comment or action that demonstrates a prejudiced, discriminatory or racist attitude or idea towards a marginalized group. Microaggressions may be subtle OR subconscious and as a result may be done intentionally or unintentionally.

Part of this assessment is designed to offer a plan for DEQ in addressing microaggressions. The ETC team received extensive feedback from DEQ employees and there are hundreds of examples of the ways in which microaggressions show up in the workplace. Microaggressions are also incredibly commonplace in human interactions in all spaces (i.e. the grocery store, breakroom, restaurant, etc.). And while an individual microaggression may not be incredibly harmful on its own, because they can occur so frequently, they can leave a greater harm or impact based on the accumulation of them over time—especially when the microaggressions are committed by the same person.

A *microaggression* is a comment or action that demonstrates a prejudiced, discriminatory or racial attitude or idea towards a marginalized group. Microaggressions may be subtle or subconscious and as a result may be done intentionally or unintentionally. A single, isolated microaggression is unlikely to cause significant harm, but they can immediately damage a relationship between people. They are incredibly commonplace in human interactions

A hypothetical example of a microaggression may be helpful here. Ronald (a person of color) is asked to join an interview panel. Although Ronald is really busy, he agrees because he wants to make sure he helps out as often as he can. He clears his calendar by rescheduling a couple of important meetings that interfere with the interview schedule. The following day, he receives an email from the head of the interview committee stating, **"Hi Ronald. Thanks for agreeing to be a panelist for the interviews. Turns out Wanda is available to be on the interview panel too. Our policy states we need at least one person of color on the panel—and since Wanda will satisfy that policy for us and make our fifth panelist, we don't need you to be on the interview panel after all. We don't want to overwhelm the interviewees with too many of us employees around the table! Thanks anyway! :)"**

As mentioned above, microaggressions are very commonplace. If you're not sure where the microaggression is in the scenario above, consider that it is likely you may be committing them regularly and/or frequently failing to perceive their occurrences when they happen to others.

*In the scenario above, Ronald experiences a microaggression when he realizes that the head of the interview committee only asked him to participate on the interview panel because they needed **token** diversity. Ronald wasn't being considered to be on the panel due to his expertise or past contributions and experiences, he was being considered only because of his race. The sacrifices (clearing schedule, postponing important meetings, etc.) Ronald made are also unacknowledged.*

Tokenism is the practice of making a performative effort to include a member of a marginalized group to appear inclusive to those groups by creating a false impression of equitable practices.

There is another person who experiences the impacts of the microaggression here—Wanda. Even if Wanda is unaware that the head of the interview panel asked her to be on the panel solely because of her race (tokenism), she is now on a panel with four colleagues who may not value her opinion or perspective if they too see her presence as only necessary to 'diversify the interview panel.' Throughout the process, Wanda may feel that her contributions are not really being acknowledged or appreciated.

The consistent presence of microaggressions may also be evidence of systemic issues. Here, the microaggression Ronald experienced was directly connected to a systemic problem at the organization. The organization has embedded (perhaps unintentionally) a practice of tokenism within its hiring practices by requiring at least one person of color on the interview panel without doing work to shift the culture underneath.[43] The microaggression against Ronald becomes one of many visible consequences of an inequitably designed policy.

A person does not need to <u>intend</u> to commit a microaggression in order to actually do so. In fact, it is likely that a large percentage of microaggressions are committed unintentionally. Because of this there is often a likelihood that the harm from the microaggression can be redressed as long as groups practice doing so with integrity and accountability.

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[43] For further reading and education, check out: https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/full/10.1086/705880

In the scenario, assume that the head of the interview panel did not mean to commit the microaggression. What becomes more important is the head of the interview panel's response when told he has committed the microaggression.

Consider the following for reflection:

1. What risks exist for Ronald if he points out the microaggression to the head of the interview panel? Consider the possibility that the head of the interview panel may be a supervisor.
2. What happens to the relationship between Ronald and the head of the interview panel if the head of the interview panel responds with defensiveness?
3. How should the head of the interview panel respond if he wants to address the harm he created?
4. If the head of the interview panel chooses to respond with defensiveness, what long-term damage may be done to the relationship *and* the work environment?

The 'micro' in microaggressions means 'small.'   But there is a moment when microaggressions are no longer small in nature and begin to resemble regular aggressions. When this happens, the remedy and accountability grows from smaller to larger as well. When a person with higher organizational power (i.e. your manager/supervisor) commits a microaggression, the consequences may be harder to ignore. The person experiencing the microaggression may naturally begin to question their emotional/mental safety as well as their ability to advance in an organization where that same manager/supervisor has direct input in their ability to advance. In short, microaggressions erode trust in people and teams.

If a person repeatedly commits the same types of microaggressions, it demonstrates an ongoing pattern and practice of harm that may become too significant to be considered a microaggression.   Once that pattern and practice is established the microaggressions are more likely to be obviously intentional, thus elevating the harm experienced.   Recall that a person's intention doesn't matter, but a pattern of trying to hurt people makes microaggressions into regular aggressions.[44]

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[44] A singular microaggression may be felt like the 'last straw' for those that experience them regularly even if they don't always experience them from the same person.

Yet, even still, there are moments when an ongoing pattern of microaggressions are not being done intentionally.   However, a pattern of unintentional microaggressions demonstrates at least an unwillingness or inability to learn from previous instances. An unwillingness or inability to learn is dangerous to an organization trying to create a more equitable and hospitable environment.

If there are marginalized groups experiencing frequent unaddressed and unaccounted for microaggressions, it is important to consider what else they are experiencing simultaneously.   Microaggressions create small harms, yet the harm grows as they accumulate.   The harm may reveal itself as burnout, feelings of exclusion and/or disconnection from teammates (amongst many other things) as trust and security erodes. It may also be incredibly difficult for the people who experience frequent microaggressions to raise awareness in those that are committing them. Because the harm may appear to be small (in isolation), it may seem easy to dismiss the harm as 'not a big deal.' Although it often plays out this way, it is unjust for those who commit the harm to also be the arbiters on whether the harm is 'significant enough' to rectify. A more restorative approach would center the person harmed first and foremost.

Consider the following for reflection:

1. Regardless of the cause of it, how do you feel when burnout sets in? How might understanding burnout better help us understand or describe microaggressions?

2. How are microaggressions impacting your work right now? (If it's hard to answer that question, explore the 'why' it's hard).

3. What do you feel when you witness a microaggression happen to a colleague? What do you do? What happens if you ignore it and do nothing?
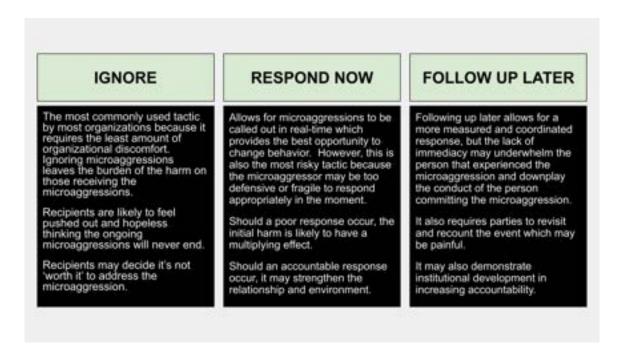
Before determining what an adequate response to microaggressions should look like, DEQ must offer some education about what microaggressions are. Although most of us will commit <u>and</u> experience them, we don't always have a shared language or understanding about an organization's expectations on addressing and resolving them.   Creating educational opportunities for DEQ employees to discuss and explore the nuance of microaggressions can help mitigate many future instances.

IMPORTANT! *Responding to microaggressions is not about punishment or retribution. It is about raising awareness to create more welcoming and hospitable environments for everyone. That requires education, care, humility, vulnerability and understanding. If a punitive response to an action or statement feels necessary (perhaps because of the harm or repeated offense) consider the fact that we are no longer in the world of microaggressions, but something more serious.*

An organizational response to microaggressions typically falls into three different types. Each response has different pros and cons and so there is a balancing test/totality of the circumstances model that an organization should explore and develop to determine the best way to deal with microaggressions.

IGNORE	RESPOND NOW	FOLLOW UP LATER
The most commonly used tactic by most organizations because it requires the least amount of organizational discomfort. Ignoring microaggressions leaves the burden of the harm on those receiving the microaggressions. Recipients are likely to feel pushed out and hopeless thinking the ongoing microaggressions will never end. Recipients may decide it's not 'worth it' to address the microaggression.	Allows for microaggressions to be called out in real-time which provides the best opportunity to change behavior. However, this is also the most risky tactic because the microaggressor may be too defensive or fragile to respond appropriately in the moment. Should a poor response occur, the initial harm is likely to have a multiplying effect. Should an accountable response occur, it may strengthen the relationship and environment.	Following up later allows for a more measured and coordinated response, but the lack of immediacy may underwhelm the person that experienced the microaggression and downplay the conduct of the person committing the microaggression. It also requires parties to revisit and recount the event which may be painful. It may also demonstrate institutional development in increasing accountability.

Microaggression Plan

1.   DEQ establish a workshop on microaggressions to offer all DEQ employees common understanding and shared language on what a microaggression is and how it creates individual and institutional harm.

2.   DEQ begin to vocalize and demonstrate the notion that those committing microaggressions will be expected to do their best to avoid defensiveness and fragility and resolve the harm directly with those experiencing the harm whenever possible (with support from a Response Team if necessary–see #3).

3.   DEQ, with the support of a third party consultant well versed in restorative practices, establish a Response Team (DEQ employees at various levels of organizational power) that have been trained or have experience on ways to lead restorative conversations when microaggressions arise. It is impossible to avoid them entirely, but if responded to properly, instances of microaggressions should not lead to fundamental breakdowns, but opportunities to strengthen DEQ's operations and ongoing practices. This group will be responsible for several things:

a. assisting in resolving microaggressions when outside help is needed or requested;
b. offering education and guidance to those who have committed the microaggression so that they have an opportunity to self-reflect and self-correct;
c. keep a confidential system to monitor the frequency of microaggression complaints sent to the Response Team;
d. use a balancing test/totality of the circumstances model to determine a proper response to a microaggression complaint (the chart below has ideas and questions to consider when assessing the action, harm and response;
e. prepare a process to elevate a response when microaggressions lose the 'micro' and become regular aggressions.

BALANCING TEST/TOTALITY OF CIRCUMSTANCES CONSIDERATIONS FOR RESPONDING TO MICROAGGRESSIONS

Things to Consider (a more complete list compiled in coordination w/Response Team:	
Supporting those aggrieved	Potential uncontrolled narrative across DEQ
The magnitude and visibility of the event	Repeated instances of microaggressions
Impact to the individual harmed	Impact to the communities nearby
Long-term impacts to the organization	Resulting feelings of individuals involved
Ongoing relationship between those involved	Impacts on recruitment and retention
Time and energy required for resolution	Impact to Individual(s) asked to mediate
The potential for growth of those involved	The role of power between those involved.
More…?	More…?

Microaggressions are challenging to plan for because they are frequent in nature, sometimes hard to name the moment they happen, and often invisible to those committing them. In fact, ETC heard hundreds of stories of all types of microaggressions (they exist around racism, sexism, ableism, and xenophobia–just to name a few domains).   Unchecked microaggressions lead to work environments filled with distrust, resentment, frustration and feelings of exclusion. Microaggressions are best resolved when the people involved in them can attend to them when they occur–but that often places the burden of doing so on those experiencing the harm. So immediate resolution is not always possible and may place too much responsibility on the person experiencing the microaggression to do the heavy lifting of starting the resolution process.   When those involved are unable to resolve the microaggression in the moment (for whatever reason), it is important that DEQ have a process within reach so that those experiencing microaggressions get help and support.

EQUITY NEEDS

HOPE

"I need hope that something is actually different and changing. Part of that is my responsibility to stay optimistic, to not let myself get discouraged, to remember that people of color don't get to throw up their hands and opt out."

"...to talk about dismantling racist systems might not be welcome because it feels unrealistic or impractical or impossible or over the top too wild. I guess I need to see more radical change? And I know that I need to be that change too."

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RECOMMENDATIONS

"...*Growing the world we want is like the slow tending of a garden, transforming the plants by fostering relationships, trust, skills, community accountability, and healing. It requires cultivating new habits internally, seeding restorative ways of being together interpersonally, uprooting practices of inequality institutionally, and planting alternative possibilities structurally. If we only concentrate on our internal work while ignoring the fires burning all around us will eventually be consumed. But if we only concentrate on putting out the blaze, we will eventually burn out.*"[45] Conducting and representing research from a strengths-based or asset-based approach, rather than solely from a deficit- and damage-based angle, better reflects Indigenous communities.[46]

In addition to the extensive recommendations embedded throughout this organizational assessment, Engage to Change has compiled this list of recommendations to support DEQ in its ongoing efforts towards anti-racism and equity work. To the best of our ability, we have tried to share a comprehensive list of actions that encompass the entire universe of possibilities found through the organizational process.   The following appear to be diametrically opposing positions: 1) this list is not exhaustive; and 2) DEQ may not be in a position to implement all of these recommendations–at least not right away. Such is the nature of equity work–there is no finish line or destination, only stride after stride on the journey. As such, we suggest that all who read and consider these recommendations do so with vulnerability, humility and curiosity. Ideally, implementation of these recommendations should be done with the principles of anti-racism and equity intact–essentially, they should be considered in community and relationship with one another, done with a thorough understanding of the role of power, and be done iteratively and collaboratively with flexibility and creativity. Team creativity and ingenuity thrives when relationships and community connections are healthy and forefront. The less connected we are the harder it is to find space for collaboration and new ideas. If DEQ wants to create new structures centered around equity and anti-racism work, it must prioritize relationship building to have the complicated and nuanced questions necessary for providing a fertile landscape for that creative exploration.

Below are some specific recommendations:

1.   Craft and continue an ongoing equity/anti-racism educational plan to increase employee understanding and connection to equity efforts and minimize expected resistance

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[45] Ruja Benjamin's Viral Justice from page 54
[46] Chilisa, 2012

to organizational change centered around anti-racism. This Organizational Assessment is also created to support DEQ in forming its upcoming DEI Action Plan and strategic planning work. As part of that work, there are some important principles that DEQ will need to retain and center. These include the following:

  a. Invest in the ongoing development of those who create and facilitate transformational, anti-racist spaces
  b. Incorporate anti-racist work examples and successes as well as failures
  c. Normalize and practice post-mortems when projects fail short or succeed
  d. Provide evolving and co-generated tools and resources
  e. Increase opportunities for ongoing peer-to-peer support
  f. Explore the possibility to offer anti-racism training programs continually
  g. Expand program content to senior leaders as well as middle managers within the Agency
  h. Institutionalize anti-racism work
  i. Consider structural ways to incorporate support for personal learning into employee performance and expectations
  j. Establish accountability measures and re-evaluate them often

2.   Create opportunities for Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDT) to help minimize the negative impacts of siloing across the organization. Multi-Disciplinary Teams have members from multiple specialties and experiences working together to solve complex problems. It is more likely DEQ can solve problems it 'doesn't know it doesn't know' when MDT are in place. These 'best practices' teams will also help reduce the siloing that occurs across the agency. This team should meet at least quarterly to discuss issues, needs and concerns that exist in regional locales. DEQ should seek to have members from each region have several representations (from different organizational power structures–front line staff, managers, directors, etc.).

3.   Power has less chance for misuse and abuse when things are done out in the open (see section on 'TRANSPARENCY'). DEQ should find ways for those in positions of power and/or leadership to 'work out in the open.' DEQ currently has affinity workgroups and should have regular meetings with affinity space representatives and members of the leadership team to strategize and discuss ways to continue to dismantle the patterns and practices related to unhealthy power structures. This could look like regular public leadership meetings or written notes to share after meetings.

4.   Power (see footnote[47] for a video of Amy Cooper abusing her access to power), for power's sake, or out of tradition, should be named, understood, and handled with curiosity

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[47] https://youtu.be/aPvb_mszKew

and critique. Working to identify the purpose of a power differential or dynamic, being honest about if it is healthy or useful for the organization's goals, and then being creative and brave in looking at ways to either flatten power or redirect it to those groups and communities that have typically been denied it is a more empowered way to handle the various organizational forms of power associated with decisions, money, attention, culture, and resources.

5.   Accountability plays an important role in preventing the misuse and abuse of power (see section on 'ACCOUNTABILITY'). DEQ should have a third party consultant assist with creating a process for annual reviews of those in positions of management and leadership.   Annual reviews should include conversations with direct reports and others that have immediate knowledge of their work over the past year.

"A manager with less positional power may be 'cut out of the chain of command' by a direct report because the direct report may have greater positional power and find access to organizational power by skipping ahead to the manager's supervisor, undermining the manager's authority."

6.   DEQ needs to revisit the letter from BIPOC[48] staff in 2022 that highlights some of the immediate issues and concerns BIPOC staff are experiencing.   DEQ should work with a third party to review and implement the pertinent recommendations set forth in the letter from BIPOC staff.

7.   DEQ create and resource an equity division with director and staff.   It is difficult to determine how much FTE should be placed into that division, but DEQ needs a group of individuals who have significant responsibility in guiding DEQ's equity work. It is clear that 1.0 FTE (the previous DEI Coordinator's FTE) is not enough to lead and facilitate DEQ equity work. That position will require adequate staff to ensure that the position is properly resourced. This position should likely be classified in a position of leadership along with other DEQ leadership.

8.   DEQ put more funding and emphasis on supporting Tribal Affairs. Currently DEQ has a less than 1.0 FTE which is not enough to ensure DEQ has proper consideration, consultation and interaction with Tribal Governments.

9.   DEQ prioritize environmental justice efforts.   Currently, environmental justice efforts are confined to staff-led workgroups and are not properly supported and resourced to be

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[48] 'BIPOC Letter' is what the document written by the DEQ BIPOC Affinity Group on 8/4/21 is called.

sustainable.   DEQ leadership should work with those leading EJ work to identify ways to bring those efforts to the forefront.

10.   DEQ complete a strategic plan that is both consistent with the Governor's requirements and consistent with anti-racism and equity principles and priorities.

11.   DEQ craft an anti-racism and education plan that provides fundamental training to all DEQ employees. This education plan is going to look different depending on what part of the state we're talking about and should be tailored to address regional needs.

12.   DEQ leadership ensure that there is adequate response to the 'BIPOC Letter' and that recommendations from the 'BIPOC Letter' are considered in DEQ's work on its DEI plan.

13.   DEQ implement the microaggression plan contained within the OA. As part of that plan, DEQ should also be prepared to educate staff on how to respond to microaggressions.

14.   DEQ create and sponsor a plan for mentorship for BIPOC staff to foster leadership, advancement within DEQ and individual growth so that recruitment and retention efforts are supported from within.

15.   DEQ should focus on Human Resources and its roles in helping to name and advance DEQ's equity goals. HR should be one of the first places to work on recreating and embedding anti-racism. Explorations in things like pay equity, retention and cultural shift are more clearly laid out in the HR section.

16.   DEQ explore ways on how to keep VIP staff informed and connected to DEQ principles and practices so that the VIP isn't siloed from the rest of agency.

17.   DEQ create a restorative justice process to resolve disputes without necessarily needing a traditional HR response/reaction.

18.   DEQ explore redistribution of power by creating committees tasked with certain things that need extra attention (hiring/recruitment/retention, restorative justice, personnel support).

19.   DEQ and the DEI Council establish a mutually agreeable mechanism for communication between DEI Council work and leadership to co-create expectations and priorities for each. It is necessary for DEQ leadership to understand its role and connection

in power to participate in this process. Anti-oppression and anti-racism efforts must be done in solidarity and collaboration. Working on addressing and healing the harms, mistrusts, and blockages between the Council and Leadership and on building accountability within and across those sections is an important piece to moving anti-racism and equity work forward. This is not to say it will be easy or quick but it is part of ETC's observations and findings that these tensions and unresolved struggles need to be addressed.   Until both groups are comfortable with the iterative process, these conversations should be facilitated by a third party.

20.   DEQ should work with a third party facilitator to coordinate a plan for responding to, implementing and addressing these and other recommendations using a collaborative, equitable, anti-racism solving approach. This organizational assessment has been constructed in a way to a) live and breathe and evolve and b) give everyone at DEQ entry points to engage with the content and suggestions wherever they are at. AND action and intentionality and planning will likely be required to ensure that movement and change and growth happens from this assessment and it doesn't just go in a drawer until the next time a consultant is hired to do an assessment.

Summary of Key Recommendations:

Ensuring that people of color, female and female-identified/socialized, and LGBTQIA2+ leadership is included and centered in design and delivery is key to success. Empowering seasoned anti-racist champions to foster their identities as anti-racist organizers and strengthening strategic anti-racist organizing networks and resourcing and supporting them in the work will further galvanize culture change. As part of that, adapting to shifting real-time, real-world examples helps to enable deep learning and organizational change. Meaningful capacity-building experiences provide space for inside-out transformation, including examination of values and moving from disconnection to connection- we call this finding your way in. An ongoing honest understanding of DEQ member's readiness for change is imperative.   Likewise, offering multiple, related transformational, anti-racist learning opportunities rooted in meeting folks where they are at can be synergistic. An emphasis on relational culture enhances trust and belonging. In addition, transformative evaluation methods have the opportunity to bolster projects by aligning assessment approaches with the design of the projects themselves. All of this requires significant dedicated space, time, human and material resources, and supports for transformational, anti-racist organizational development

Glossary[49]

Ableism

The system of oppression that disadvantages disabled people and people with disabilities and advantages people who do not currently have disabilities. Like other forms of oppression, it functions on individual, institutional, and cultural levels. Ableism is not solely about the experiences of people with disabilities as targets of discrimination, but rather about the interaction of institutional structures, cultural norms, and individual beliefs and behaviors that together function to maintain the status quo and exclude people with disabilities from many areas of society.

SOURCE: *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook*, edited by Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell, with Diane J. Goodman and Khyati Y. Joshi (Routledge, 2016), p. 304.

Accountability

In the context of racial equity work, accountability refers to the ways in which individuals and communities hold themselves to their goals and actions, and acknowledge the values and groups to which they are responsible.

To be accountable, one must be visible, with a transparent agenda and process. Invisibility defies examination; it is, in fact, employed in order to avoid detection and examination. Accountability demands commitment. It might be defined as "what kicks in when convenience runs out." Accountability requires some sense of urgency and becoming a true stakeholder in the outcome. Accountability can be externally imposed (legal or organizational requirements), or internally applied (moral, relational, faith-based, or recognized as some combination of the two) on a continuum from the institutional and organizational level to the individual level. From a relational point of view, accountability is not always doing it right. Sometimes it's really about what happens after it's done wrong.

SOURCE: *Accountability and White Anti-Racist Organizing: Stories from Our Work*, Bonnie Berman Cushing with Lila Cabbil, Margery Freeman, Jeff Hitchcock, and Kimberly Richards (2010).

Related Resources: Accountability

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[49] Thanks to https://www.racialequitytools.org/glossary for foundation of this glossary

Ally

1. Someone who makes the commitment and effort to recognize their privilege (based on gender, class, race, sexual identity, etc.) and work in solidarity with oppressed groups in the struggle for justice. Allies understand that it is in their own interest to end all forms of oppression, even those from which they may benefit in concrete ways.

2. An action, not an identity. Members of the advantaged group recognize their privilege and work in solidarity with oppressed groups to dismantle the systems of oppression(s) from which they derive power, privilege, and acceptance. Requires understanding that it is in their own interest to end all forms of oppression, even those from which they may benefit in concrete ways. It means taking intentional, overt, and consistent responsibility for the changes we know are needed in our society, and often ignore or leave for others to deal with; it does so in a way that facilitates the empowerment of persons targeted by oppression. This framework can be used to imply that one does not feel directly implicated by the oppression.

SOURCE:

1. OpenSource Leadership Strategies, "[The Dynamic System of Power, Privilege, and Oppression](#)" (2008).

2. *This definition was found on the White Noise Collective webpage "[Shared Understandings](#)"* **with this source note:** Definitions, quotes and examples compiled from many sources, including Andrea Ayvazian, Andrea Smith, Black Girl Dangerous, Class Action, Kathryn Mathers, Dr. Wade Nobles, Peggy McIntosh, *Love, Race and Liberation*, Barbara Love, OpenSource Leadership, Racial Equity Tools, Robin DiAngelo, Colors of Resistance, *Challenging White Supremacy*, Isaac Giron, Anne Braden, Wikipedia, and Barbara Major, & *People's Institute for Survival and Beyond*.

Anti-Black

The Council for Democratizing Education defines anti-Blackness as being a two-part formation that both voids Blackness of value, while systematically marginalizing Black people and their issues. The first form of anti-Blackness is overt racism. Beneath this anti-Black racism is the covert structural and systemic racism which categorically predetermines the socioeconomic status of Blacks in this country. The structure is held in place by anti-Black policies, institutions, and ideologies.

The second form of anti-Blackness is the unethical disregard for anti-Black institutions and policies. This disregard is the product of class, race, and/or gender privilege certain individuals experience due to anti-Black institutions and policies. This form of anti-Blackness is protected by the first form of overt racism.

SOURCE: The Movement for Black Lives (M4BL), "Glossary."

Related Resources: Racism (scroll down alphabetically to the box for "**Anti-Blackness**")

Anti-Racism

Anti-Racism is defined as the work of actively opposing racism by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social life. Anti-racism tends to be an individualized approach, and set up in opposition to individual racist behaviors and impacts.

SOURCE: Race Forward, "Race Reporting Guide" (2015).

Related Resources: Theory (scroll down alphabetically to the box for "**Anti-Racism**")

Anti-Racist

An anti-racist is someone who is supporting an antiracist policy through their actions or expressing antiracist ideas. This includes the expression of ideas that racial groups are equals and do not need developing, and supporting policies that reduce racial inequity.

SOURCE: Ibram X. Kendi, *How To Be An Antiracist*, Random House, 2019.

Anti-Racist Ideas

An antiracist idea is any idea that suggests the racial groups are equals in all of their apparent difference and that there is nothing wrong with any racial group. Antiracists argue that racist policies are the cause of racial injustices.

SOURCE: Ibram X. Kendi, *How To Be An Antiracist*, Random House, 2019.

Anti Semitism

Antisemitism has deep historical roots and uses exploitation, marginalization, discrimination, and violence as its tools. Like all oppressions, the ideology contains elements of dehumanization and degradation via lies and stereotypes about Jews, as well as a mythology. The myth changes and adapts to different times and places, but fundamentally it says that Jews are to blame for society's problems.

Antisemitism and Islamophobia are not only entangled, but deeply rooted in the same systems of white supremacy and Christian hegemony that have also driven ongoing genocide against indigenous people, and bigotry toward non-Christians from other parts of the world.

SOURCE: *Understanding Antisemitism: An Offering to our Movement*, A Resource from Jews for Racial & Economic Justice (accessed July 2022).

BIPOC

A term referring to "Black and/or Indigenous People of Color." While "POC" or People of Color is often used as well, BIPOC explicitly leads with Black and Indigenous identities, which helps to counter anti-Black racism and invisibilization of Native communities.

SOURCE: *Creating Cultures and Practices for Racial Equity: A Toolbox for Advancing Racial Equity for Arts and Cultural Organizations*, Nayantara Sen & Terry Keleher, Race Forward (2021).

Black Lives Matter

A political movement to address systemic and state violence against African Americans. Per the Black Lives Matter organizers: "In 2013, three radical Black organizers—Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi—created a Black-centered political will and movement building project called #BlackLivesMatter. It was in response to the acquittal of Trayvon Martin's murderer, George Zimmerman. The project is now a member-led global network of more than 40 chapters. [Black Lives Matter] members organize and build local power to intervene in violence inflicted on Black communities by the state and vigilantes. Black Lives Matter is an ideological and political intervention in a world where Black lives are systematically and intentionally targeted for demise. It is an affirmation of Black folks' humanity, our contributions to this society, and our resilience in the face of deadly oppression."

SOURCE: Black Lives Matter, "Herstory" (accessed October 2019).

Affinity Groups

An affinity group is an intentionally created space for those who share an identity to convene for learning, support, and connections. Caucuses based on racial identity are often composed, respectively, of people of color, white people, people who hold multiracial identities, or people who share specific racial or ethnic identities.

To advance racial equity, there is work for white people and people of color to do separately and together. Caucuses provide spaces for people to work within their own racial/ethnic groups. For white people, a caucus provides time and space to work explicitly and intentionally on understanding white culture and white privilege and to increase one's critical analysis around these concepts. A white caucus also puts the onus on white people to teach each other about these ideas, rather than placing a burden on people of color to teach them. For people of color, a caucus is a place to work with peers to address the impact of racism, to interrupt experiences of internalized racism, and to create a space for healing and working for individual and collective liberation. At times, people of color may also break into more specific race-based caucuses, sometimes based on experiences with a particular issue, for example police violence, immigration, or land rights. Groups that use caucuses in their organizational racial equity work, especially in workplaces and coalitions, generally meet separately and create a process to rejoin and work together collectively.

SOURCE: RacialEquityTools.org, MP Associates, Center for Assessment and Policy Development, and World Trust Educational Services.

Related Resources: [Caucus and Affinity Groups](#)

Centering Blackness

1. Considering the Black experience as unique and foundational to shaping America's economic and social policies:

- Centering Blackness demands that we create and design policies and practices that intentionally lift up and protect Black people.
- Anti-blackness doesn't only impact Black people; it holds back and harms [all Americans](#) and necessitates collective healing.
- Centering Blackness allows for a completely different worldview to emerge, free from the constraints of white supremacy and patriarchy.

2. White supremacy—which has harmed everyone, including robbing white people of their own humanity—needs anti-blackness to thrive. Centering blackness removes both the fuel and the constraints of white supremacy, allowing everyone to be free of its tyranny. Doing so acknowledges the historical root of this racial hierarchy that has intentionally placed black people at the bottom of society and gives us the opportunity to see the world through the lens of the black experience. It requires us to imagine how our rules and structures would be reorganized and envision a world where we all thrive because the bottom is removed. When we remove blackness from the bottom, everybody gets to be seen.

SOURCE:

- "Centering Blackness,"Insight Center.
- Alicia Walters, Black Thought Project, interviewed by Siraad Dirshe in "What Does it Mean to 'Center Black People'?," *The New York Times* (2020).

Cisgender

A term (pronounced *sis-gender*) used to refer to an individual whose gender identity aligns with the sex assigned to them at birth. The prefix cis- comes from the Latin word for "on the same side as." People who are both cisgender and heterosexual are sometimes referred to as "cishet" (pronounced *sis-het*) individuals. The term cisgender is not a slur. People who are not trans should avoid calling themselves "normal" and instead refer to themselves as cisgender or cis.

SOURCE: PFLAG National Glossary of Terms, June 2022 (accessed July 2022).

Classism

Differential treatment based on social class or perceived social class. Classism is the systematic oppression of subordinated class groups to advantage and strengthen the dominant class groups. It's the systematic assignment of characteristics of worth and ability based on social class. Policies and practices are set up to benefit more class-privileged people at the expense of the less class-privileged people, resulting in drastic income and wealth inequality… and the culture which perpetuates these systems and this unequal valuing.

SOURCE: Class Action (accessed July 2022).

Collusion

When people act to perpetuate oppression or prevent others from working to eliminate oppression.

Example: Able-bodied people who object to strategies for making buildings accessible because of the expense.

SOURCE: *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook*, edited by Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell, and Pat Griffin (Routledge, 1997).

Colonization

Colonization can be defined as some form of invasion, dispossession, and subjugation of a people. The invasion need not be military; it can begin—or continue—as geographical

intrusion in the form of agricultural, urban, or industrial encroachments. The result of such incursion is the dispossession of vast amounts of lands from the original inhabitants. This is often legalized after the fact. The long-term result of such massive dispossession is institutionalized inequality. The colonizer/colonized relationship is by nature an unequal one that benefits the colonizer at the expense of the colonized.

Ongoing and legacy colonialism impact power relations in most of the world today. For example, white supremacy as a philosophy was developed largely to justify European colonial exploitation of the Global South (including enslaving African peoples, extracting resources from much of Asia and Latin America, and enshrining cultural norms of whiteness as desirable both in colonizing and colonizer nations). See also: **Decolonization**.

SOURCE: Emma LaRocque, PhD, "Colonization and Racism," (Aboriginal Perspectives). Also see _Racism and Colonialism_, edited by Robert Ross (1982), and Andrea Smith, "Indigeneity, Settler Colonialism, White Supremacy" (_Racial Formation in the Twenty-First Century_, 2012).

Related Resources: Diaspora and Colonization (scroll down alphabetically to the boxes for "**Global History of Colonialism**" and "**Neo-Colonialism and Settler Colonialism**")

Color-Blindness

We recognize the problematic ableist language of this term, but we reference it as used by scholars to describe an important social phenomenon. Color-blind ideology (or color-evasiveness – purporting to not notice race in an effort to not appear be racist). Asserts that ending discrimination merely requires treating individuals as equally as possible, without regard to race, culture, or ethnicity. Color-blindness, by overlooking the cumulative and enduring ways in which race unequally shapes life chances and opportunities for people from different groups, actually reinforces and sustains an unequal status quo. By leaving structural inequalities in place, color-blindness has become the "new racism." It also ignores cultural attributes that people value and deserve to have recognized and affirmed.

SOURCE: _Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook_, edited by Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell, with Diane J. Goodman and Khyati Y. Joshi (Routledge, 2016), p. 138.

Colorism

Using white skin color as the standard, colorism is the allocation of privilege and favor to lighter skin colors and disadvantage to darker skin colors. Colorism operates both within and across racial and ethnic groups.

SOURCE: Burton, Linda M et al., "Critical Race Theories, Colorism, and the Decade's Research on Families of Color," *Journal of Marriage and Family* 72 (2010), pp. 440–459.

Cultural Racism

Cultural racism refers to representations, messages and stories conveying the idea that behaviors and values associated with white people or "whiteness" are automatically "better" or more "normal" than those associated with other racially defined groups. Cultural racism shows up in advertising, movies, history books, definitions of patriotism, and in policies and laws. Cultural racism is also a powerful force in maintaining systems of internalized supremacy and internalized racism. It does that by influencing collective beliefs about what constitutes appropriate behavior, what is seen as beautiful, and the value placed on various forms of expression. All of these cultural norms and values in the U.S. have explicitly or implicitly racialized ideals and assumptions (for example, what "nude" means as a color, which facial features and body types are considered beautiful, which child-rearing practices are considered appropriate.)

SOURCE: RacialEquityTools.org, MP Associates, Center for Assessment and Policy Development, and World Trust Educational Services.

Related Resources: Racism (scroll down alphabetically to the box for "**Cultural Racism**")

Culture

A social system of meaning and custom that is developed by a group of people to assure its adaptation and survival. These groups are distinguished by a set of unspoken rules that shape values, beliefs, habits, patterns of thinking, behaviors and styles of communication.

SOURCE: Institute for Democratic Renewal and Project Change Anti-Racism Initiative, *A Community Builder's Tool Kit*, Appendix I (2000).

Decolonization

1. Decolonization may be defined as the active resistance against colonial powers, and a shifting of power towards political, economic, educational, cultural, psychic independence and power that originate from a colonized nation's own indigenous culture. This process occurs politically and also applies to personal and societal

psychic, cultural, political, agricultural, and educational deconstruction of colonial oppression.

2. Per Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang: "Decolonization doesn't have a synonym"; it is not a substitute for 'human rights' or 'social justice', though undoubtedly, they are connected in various ways. Decolonization demands an Indigenous framework and a centering of Indigenous land, Indigenous sovereignty, and Indigenous ways of thinking.

SOURCE:

1. The Movement for Black Lives (M4BL), "Glossary."
2. Eric Ritskes, "What Is Decolonization and Why Does It Matter?"

Related Resources: Decolonization Theory and Practice

Discrimination

1. The unequal treatment of members of various groups based on race, gender, social class, sexual orientation, physical ability, religion and other categories.
2. [In the United States] the law makes it illegal to discriminate against someone on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, or sex. The law also makes it illegal to retaliate against a person because the person complained about discrimination, filed a charge of discrimination, or participated in an employment discrimination investigation or lawsuit. The law also requires that employers reasonably accommodate applicants' and employees' sincerely held religious practices, unless doing so would impose an undue hardship on the operation of the employer's business.

SOURCE:

1. Institute for Democratic Renewal and Project Change Anti-Racism Initiative, *A Community Builder's Tool Kit*, Appendix I (2000).
2. U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, "Laws Enforced by EEOC" (accessed June 2013).

Diversity

Diversity includes all the ways in which people differ, and it encompasses all the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another. It is all-inclusive and recognizes everyone and every group as part of the diversity that should be valued. A broad definition includes not only race, ethnicity, and gender—the groups that most often come to mind when the term "diversity" is used—but also age, national origin, religion,

disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, and physical appearance. It also involves different ideas, perspectives, and values.

It is important to note that many activists and thinkers critique diversity alone as a strategy. For instance, Baltimore Racial Justice Action states: "Diversity is silent on the subject of equity. In an anti-oppression context, therefore, the issue is not diversity, but rather equity. Often when people talk about diversity, they are thinking only of the "non-dominant" groups."

SOURCE:

1. UC Berkeley Center for Equity, Inclusion and Diversity, "Glossary of Terms" (page 34 in 2009 Strategic Plan).
2. Baltimore Racial Justice Action, "Our Definitions" (2018).

Elder Oppression

Systematic subordination and mistreatment of young people and elders based on age through the restriction and denial of opportunities to exercise social, economic, and political power. Youth and elder oppressions both include restricted access to goods, services, and privileges of society, along with loss of voice and limited access to participation in society. The subordination of young people and elders is supported by institutional structures and practices of society, networks of laws, rules, policies, and procedures, along with the attitudes, values, and actions of individuals that combine to ensure the subordinated status of members of these socially constructed identity groups. Young people and elders are marginalized and excluded by practices that give middle-aged adults the power to act on and for them, often without their agreement or consent. (See also **Youth Oppression**.)

SOURCE: *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook*, edited by Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell, with Diane J. Goodman and Khyati Y. Joshi (Routledge, 2016), p. 342.

Equity

To treat everyone fairly. An equity emphasis seeks to render justice by deeply considering structural factors that benefit some social groups/communities and harm other social groups/communities. Sometimes justice demands, for the purpose of equity, an unequal response.

SOURCE: YWCA, "Our Shared Language: Social Justice Glossary" (2016, accessed July 2022).

Ethnicity

A social construct that divides people into smaller social groups based on characteristics such as shared sense of group membership, values, behavioral patterns, language, political and economic interests, history, and ancestral geographical base.

Examples of different ethnic groups are: Cape Verdean, Haitian, African American (Black); Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese (Asian); Cherokee, Mohawk, Navaho (Native American); Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican (Latino); Polish, Irish, and Swedish (White).

SOURCE: *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook*, edited by Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell, and Pat Griffin, Routledge, 1997.

Related Resources: Race, Ethnicity, and Indigeneity (scroll down alphabetically to the box for "**Ethnicity**")

Gender

Broadly, gender is a set of socially constructed roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate.

SOURCE: PFLAG National Glossary of Terms, June 2022 (accessed July 2022).

Gender Identity

A person's deeply held core sense of self in relation to gender. Gender identity does not always correspond to biological sex. People become aware of their gender identity at many different stages of life, from as early as 18 months and into adulthood. Gender identity is a separate concept from sexuality and gender expression.

SOURCE: PFLAG National Glossary of Terms, June 2022 (accessed July 2022).

Genderfluid

Describes a person who does not consistently adhere to one fixed gender and who may move among genders.

SOURCE: PFLAG National Glossary of Terms, June 2022 (accessed July 2022).

Heteronormativity

The assumption that everyone is heterosexual, and that heterosexuality is superior to all other sexualities. This includes the often implicitly held idea that heterosexuality is the norm and that other sexualities are "different" or "abnormal."

SOURCE: PFLAG National Glossary of Terms, June 2022 (accessed July 2022).

Heterosexism

Structural, interpersonal, or other forms of discrimination or prejudice against anyone who does not conform to binary gender norms based on the assumption that heterosexuality is the normal/correct sexual orientation.

SOURCE: *This definition was found on the White Noise Collective webpage "Shared Understandings"* **with this source note:** Definitions, quotes and examples compiled from many sources, including Andrea Ayvazian, Andrea Smith, Black Girl Dangerous, Class Action, Kathryn Mathers, Dr. Wade Nobles, Peggy McIntosh, *Love, Race and Liberation*, Barbara Love, OpenSource Leadership, Racial Equity Tools, Robin DiAngelo, Colors of Resistance, *Challenging White Supremacy*, Isaac Giron, Anne Braden, Wikipedia, and Barbara Major, & *People's Institute for Survival and Beyond*.

Implicit Bias

Also known as unconscious or hidden bias, implicit biases are negative associations that people unknowingly hold. They are expressed automatically, without conscious awareness. Many studies have indicated that implicit biases affect individuals' attitudes and actions, thus creating real-world implications, even though individuals may not even be aware that those biases exist within themselves. Notably, implicit biases have been shown to trump individuals' stated commitments to equality and fairness, thereby producing behavior that diverges from the explicit attitudes that many people profess. The Implicit Association Test (IAT) is often used to measure implicit biases with regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, and other topics.

SOURCE: Cheryl Staats, *State of the Science: Implicit Bias Review 2013*, Kirwan Institute, The Ohio State University.

Related Resources: Implicit Bias

Inclusion

Authentically bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision/policy making in a way that shares power.

SOURCE: OpenSource Leadership Strategies

Indigeneity

Indigenous populations are composed of the existing descendants of the peoples who inhabited the present territory of a country wholly or partially at the time when persons of a

different culture or ethnic origin arrived there from other parts of the world, overcame them and, by conquest, settlement, or other means, reduced them to a non-dominant or colonial condition; who today live more in conformity with their particular social, economic, and cultural customs and traditions than with the institutions of the country of which they now form part, under a State structure which incorporates mainly national, social, and cultural characteristics of other segments of the population which are predominant.

(Examples: Maori in territory now defined as New Zealand; Mexicans in territory now defined as Texas, California, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Nevada, and parts of Colorado, Wyoming, Kansas, and Oklahoma; Native American tribes in territory now defined as the United States.)

SOURCE: United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (2010, page 9), originally presented in the preliminary report of the Special Rapporteur of the UN Commission on Human Rights, José Martínez Cobo (1972, page 10).

Related Resources: Race, Ethnicity, and Indigeneity (scroll down alphabetically to the box for "**Indigeneity**")

Individual Racism

Individual racism refers to the beliefs, attitudes, and actions of individuals that support or perpetuate racism. Individual racism can be deliberate, or the individual may act to perpetuate or support racism without knowing that is what he or she is doing.

Examples:

- Telling a racist joke, using a racial epithet, or believing in the inherent superiority of whites over other groups.
- Avoiding people of color whom you do not know personally, but not whites whom you do not know personally (e.g., white people crossing the street to avoid a group of Latino/a young people; locking their doors when they see African American families sitting on their doorsteps in a city neighborhood; or not hiring a person of color because "something doesn't feel right").
- Accepting things as they are (a form of collusion).

SOURCE: *Flipping the Script: White Privilege and Community Building* by Maggie Potapchuk, Sally Leiderman, Donna Bivens, and Barbara Major (2005).

Institutional Racism

Institutional racism refers specifically to the ways in which institutional policies and practices create different outcomes for different racial groups. The institutional policies may never mention any racial group, but their effect is to create advantages for whites and oppression and disadvantage for people from groups classified as people of color.

Examples:

- Government policies that explicitly restricted the ability of people to get loans to buy or improve their homes in neighborhoods with high concentrations of African Americans (also known as "red-lining").
- City sanitation department policies that concentrate trash transfer stations and other environmental hazards disproportionately in communities of color.

SOURCE: *Flipping the Script: White Privilege and Community Building* by Maggie Potapchuk, Sally Leiderman, Donna Bivens, and Barbara Major (2005).

Related Resources: Racism (scroll down alphabetically to the box for "**Institutional Racism**")

Internalized Supremacy/Dominance/Entitlement

Occurs among white people when they believe and/or act on assumptions that white people are superior to, more capable, intelligent, or entitled than people of color. It occurs when members of the dominant white group take their group's socially advantaged status as normal and deserved, rather than recognizing how it has been conferred through racialized systems of inequality. Internalized dominance may be unconscious or conscious. A white person who insists that anyone who works hard can get ahead, without acknowledging the barriers of racism, is consciously or unconsciously expressing internalized dominance. Whites who assume that European music and art are superior to other forms are enacting internalized dominance.

SOURCE: *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook*, edited by Maurianne Adams and Lee Anne Bell, with Diane J. Goodman and Khyati Y. Joshi (Routledge, 2016), page 137.

Related Resources: Internalized Racism (scroll down alphabetically to the box for "**Internalized Racial Superiority**")

Internalized Racism

Internalized racism is the situation that occurs in a racist system when a racial group oppressed by racism supports the supremacy and dominance of the dominating group by

maintaining or participating in the set of attitudes, behaviors, social structures, and ideologies that undergird the dominating group's power. It involves four essential and interconnected elements:

1. *Decision-making* - Due to racism, people of color do not have the ultimate decision-making power over the decisions that control our lives and resources. As a result, on a personal level, we may think white people know more about what needs to be done for us than we do. On an interpersonal level, we may not support each other's authority and power – especially if it is in opposition to the dominating racial group. Structurally, there is a system in place that rewards people of color who support white supremacy and power and coerces or punishes those who do not.
2. *Resources* - Resources, broadly defined (e.g. money, time, etc), are unequally in the hands and under the control of white people. Internalized racism is the system in place that makes it difficult for people of color to get access to resources for our own communities and to control the resources of our community. We learn to believe that serving and using resources for ourselves and our particular community is not serving "everybody."
3. *Standards* - With internalized racism, the standards for what is appropriate or "normal" that people of color accept are white people's or Eurocentric standards. We have difficulty naming, communicating and living up to our deepest standards and values, and holding ourselves and each other accountable to them.
4. *Naming the problem* - There is a system in place that misnames the problem of racism as a problem of or caused by people of color and blames the disease – emotional, economic, political, etc. – on people of color. With internalized racism, people of color might, for example, believe we are more violent than white people and not consider state-sanctioned political violence or the hidden or privatized violence of white people and the systems they put in place and support.

SOURCE: Donna Bivens, *Internalized Racism: A Definition* (Women's Theological Center, 1995).

Related Resources: Internalized Racism

Interpersonal Racism

Interpersonal racism occurs between individuals. Once we bring our private beliefs into our interaction with others, racism is now in the interpersonal realm.

Examples: public expressions of racial prejudice, hate, bias, and bigotry between individuals

SOURCE: *Chronic Disparity: Strong and Pervasive Evidence of Racial Inequalities* by Keith Lawrence and Terry Keleher (2004).

Related Resources: Racism (scroll down alphabetically to the box for "**Interpersonal Racism**")

Intersectionality

1. Exposing [one's] multiple identities can help clarify the ways in which a person can simultaneously experience privilege and oppression. For example, a Black woman in America does not experience gender inequalities in exactly the same way as a white woman, nor racial oppression identical to that experienced by a Black man. Each race and gender intersection produces a qualitatively distinct life.
2. Per Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw: Intersectionality is simply a prism to see the interactive effects of various forms of discrimination and disempowerment. It looks at the way that racism, many times, interacts with patriarchy, heterosexism, classism, xenophobia — seeing that the overlapping vulnerabilities created by these systems actually create specific kinds of challenges. "Intersectionality 102," then, is to say that these distinct problems create challenges for movements that are only organized around these problems as separate and individual. So when racial justice doesn't have a critique of patriarchy and homophobia, the particular way that racism is experienced and exacerbated by heterosexism, classism etc., falls outside of our political organizing. It means that significant numbers of people in our communities aren't being served by social justice frames because they don't address the particular ways that they're experiencing discrimination.

SOURCE:

1. Intergroup Resources, "Intersectionality" (2012).
2. Otamere Guobadia, "Kimberlé Crenshaw and Lady Phyll Talk Intersectionality, Solidarity, and Self-Care" (2018).

Related Resources: Intersectionality

LGBTQ+

An acronym that collectively refers to individuals who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer, sometimes stated as LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) or, historically, GLBT (gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender). The addition of the Q for queer is a more recently preferred version of the acronym as cultural opinions of the term queer focus increasingly on its positive, reclaimed definition. The Q can also stand for

questioning, referring to those who are still exploring their own sexuality and/or gender. The "+" represents those who are part of the community but for whom LGBTQ does not accurately capture or reflect their identity.

SOURCE: PFLAG National Glossary of Terms, June 2022 (accessed July 2022).

Liberation

The creation of relationships, societies, communities, organizations, and collective spaces characterized by equity, fairness, and the implementation of systems for the allocation of goods, services, benefits, and rewards that support the full participation of each human and the promotion of their full humanness.

SOURCE: *Critical Liberation Theory*, Barbara J. Love, Keri DeJong, and Christopher Hughbanks (UMASS, Amherst, 2007).

Related Resources: Racial Equity (scroll down alphabetically to the box for "**Racial Justice and Liberation**")

Liberatory Consciousness

A liberatory consciousness enables humans to:

- Live their lives in oppressive systems and institutions with awareness and intentionality, rather than on the basis of the socialization to which they have been subjected.
- Maintain an awareness of the dynamics of oppression characterizing society without giving in to despair and hopelessness about that condition, to maintain an awareness of the role played by each individual in the maintenance of the system without blaming them for the roles they play, and at the same time practice intentionality about changing the systems of oppression.
- Live "outside" the patterns of thought and behavior learned through the socialization process that helps to perpetuate oppressive systems.

Four elements in developing a liberatory consciousness are awareness, analysis, acting, and accountability/ally-ship.

SOURCE: Barbara J. Love, "Developing a Liberatory Consciousness," *Readings for Diversity and Social Justice*, edited by Maurianne Adams et. al., pages 599–600.

Related Resources: Racial Equity (scroll down alphabetically to the box for "**Racial Justice and Liberation**")

Marginalization

A social process by which individuals or groups are (intentionally or unintentionally) distanced from access to power and resources and constructed as insignificant, peripheral, or less valuable/privileged to a community or "mainstream" society. This term describes a social process, so as not to imply a lack of agency. Marginalized groups or people are those excluded from mainstream social, economic, cultural, or political life. Examples of marginalized groups include, but are by no means limited to, groups excluded due to race, religion, political or cultural group, age, gender, or financial status. To what extent such populations are marginalized, however, is context specific and reliant on the cultural organization of the social site in question.

SOURCE: The University of British Columbia's Equity & Inclusion Glossary of Terms, citing The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods

Microaggression

The everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership.

SOURCE: Derald Wing Sue, PhD, "Microaggressions: More than Just Race" (*Psychology Today*, 17 November 2010).

Related Resources: Racism (scroll down alphabetically to the box for "**Interpersonal Racism**")

Model Minority

A term created by sociologist William Peterson to describe the Japanese community, whom he saw as being able to overcome oppression because of their cultural values.

While individuals employing the Model Minority trope may think they are being complimentary, in fact the term is related to colorism and its root, anti-Blackness. The model minority myth creates an understanding of ethnic groups, including Asian Americans, as a monolith, or as a mass whose parts cannot be distinguished from each other. The model minority myth can be understood as a tool that white supremacy uses to pit people of color against each other in order to protect its status.

SOURCE: Asian American Activism: The Continuing Struggle, "Glossary" (2016).

Movement Building

Movement building is the effort of social change agents to engage power holders and the broader society in addressing a systemic problem or injustice while promoting an alternative vision or solution. Movement building requires a range of intersecting approaches through a set of distinct stages over a long-term period of time. Through movement building, organizers can:

- Propose solutions to the root causes of social problems.
- Enable people to exercise their collective power.
- Humanize groups that have been denied basic human rights and improve conditions for the groups affected.
- Create structural change by building something larger than a particular organization or campaign.
- Promote visions and values for society based on fairness, justice, and democracy.

SOURCE: Julie Quiroz-Martinez, _From the Roots: Building the Power of Communities of Color to Challenge Structural Racism_ (Akonadi Foundation, 2010).

Related Resources: Movement Building

Multicultural Competency

A process of learning about and becoming allies with people from other cultures, thereby broadening our own understanding and ability to participate in a multicultural process. The key element to becoming more culturally competent is respect for the ways that others live in and organize the world and an openness to learn from them.

SOURCE: Paul Kivel, "Multicultural Competence" (2007).

Related Resources: Multicultural Competency

Nonbinary

Refers to people who do not subscribe to the gender binary. They might exist between or beyond the man-woman binary. Some use the term exclusively, while others may use it interchangeably with terms like genderqueer, genderfluid, gender nonconforming, gender diverse, or gender expansive. It can also be combined with other descriptors e.g. nonbinary woman or transmasc nonbinary. Language is imperfect, so it's important to trust and respect the words that nonbinary people use to describe their genders and experiences.

SOURCE: PFLAG National Glossary of Terms, June 2022 (accessed July 2022).

Oppression

The systematic subjugation of one social group by a more powerful social group for the social, economic, and political benefit of the more powerful social group. Rita Hardiman and Bailey Jackson state that oppression exists when the following 4 conditions are found:

the oppressor group has the power to define reality for themselves and others,

the target groups take in and internalize the negative messages about them and end up cooperating with the oppressors (thinking and acting like them),

genocide, harassment, and discrimination are systematic and institutionalized, so that individuals are not necessary to keep it going, and

members of both the oppressor and target groups are socialized to play their roles as normal and correct.

Oppression = Power + Prejudice

SOURCE: "What Is Racism?" – Dismantling Racism Works (dRworks) web workbook.

Pansexual

Refers to a person whose emotional, romantic and/or physical attraction is to people inclusive of all genders. People who are pansexual need not have had any sexual experience: It is the attraction and self-identification that determine the orientation. Pansexuality and bisexuality are different; pansexuality includes all genders equally, whereas bisexuality can favor some genders over others.

SOURCE: PFLAG National Glossary of Terms, June 2022 (accessed July 2022).

Patriarchy (Institutional/Structural/Systemic Sexism)

An historically based, institutionally perpetuated system of exploitation and oppression in which those assigned male, or those exhibiting characteristics that have been assigned male, hold ultimate authority and privilege central to social organization, occupying roles of political leadership, moral authority, and control of property. It implies and entails female subordination. Can result in gendered outcomes even without specific gendered animus articulated between individuals.

SOURCE: *This definition was found on the White Noise Collective webpage "Shared Understandings"* **with this source note:** Definitions, quotes and examples compiled from many sources, including Andrea Ayvazian, Andrea Smith, Black Girl Dangerous, Class Action, Kathryn Mathers, Dr. Wade Nobles, Peggy McIntosh, *Love, Race and Liberation,* Barbara Love, OpenSource Leadership, Racial Equity Tools, Robin DiAngelo, Colors of

Resistance, *Challenging White Supremacy*, Isaac Giron, Anne Braden, Wikipedia, and Barbara Major, & *People's Institute for Survival and Beyond.*

People of Color

Often the preferred collective term for referring to non-White racial groups. Racial justice advocates have been using the term "people of color" (not to be confused with the pejorative "colored people") since the late 1970s as an inclusive and unifying frame across different racial groups that are not White, to address racial inequities. While "people of color" can be a politically useful term, and describes people with their own attributes (as opposed to what they are not, e.g., "non-White"), it is also important whenever possible to identify people through their own racial/ethnic group, as each has its own distinct experience and meaning and may be more appropriate.

SOURCE: Race Forward, "Race Reporting Guide" (2015).

Power

1. Power is unequally distributed globally and in U.S. society; some individuals or groups wield greater power than others, thereby allowing them greater access and control over resources. Wealth, whiteness, citizenship, patriarchy, heterosexism, and education are a few key social mechanisms through which power operates. Although power is often conceptualized as power over other individuals or groups, other variations are power with (used in the context of building collective strength) and power within (which references an individual's internal strength). Learning to "see" and understand relations of power is vital to organizing for progressive social change.
2. Power may also be understood as the ability to influence others and impose one's beliefs. All power is relational, and the different relationships either reinforce or disrupt one another. The importance of the concept of power to anti-racism is clear: racism cannot be understood without understanding that power is not only an individual relationship but a cultural one, and that power relationships are shifting constantly. Power can be used malignantly and intentionally, but need not be, and individuals within a culture may benefit from power of which they are unaware.
3. (A) The ability to name or define. (B) The ability to decide. (C) The ability the set the rule, standard, or policy. (D) The ability to change the rule, standard, or policy to serve your needs, wants, or desires. (E) The ability to influence decision makers to make choices in favor of your cause, issue, or concern. Each of these definitions can manifest on personal, social, institutional, or structural levels:

- *Personal Power* - 1. Self-determination. 2. Power that an individual possesses or builds in their personal life and interpersonal relationships.
- *Social Power* - 1. Communal self-determination. 2. A grassroots collective organization of personal power. 3. Power that social groups possess or build among themselves to determine and shape their collective lives.
- *Institutional Power* - 1. Power to create and shape the rules, policies, and actions of an institution. 2. To have institutional power is to be a decision maker or to have great influence upon a decision maker of an institution.
- *Structural Power* - To have structural power is to create and shape the rules, policies, and actions that govern multiple and intersecting institutions or an industry.

SOURCE:

1. Intergroup Resources, "Power" (2012).
2. Alberta Civil Liberties Research Centre, "Racism and Power" (2018) / "CARED Glossary" (2020).
3. YWCA, "Our Shared Language: Social Justice Glossary" (2016, accessed Oct 2021).

Prejudice

A pre-judgment or unjustifiable, and usually negative, attitude of one type of individual or groups toward another group and its members. Such negative attitudes are typically based on unsupported generalizations (or stereotypes) that deny the right of individual members of certain groups to be recognized and treated as individuals with individual characteristics.

SOURCE: Institute for Democratic Renewal and Project Change Anti-Racism Initiative, *A Community Builder's Tool Kit*, Appendix I (2000).

Privilege

Unearned social power accorded by the formal and informal institutions of society to ALL members of a dominant group (e.g. white privilege, male privilege, etc.). Privilege is usually invisible to those who have it because we're taught not to see it, but nevertheless it puts them at an advantage over those who do not have it.

SOURCE: Colours of Resistance Archive, "Privilege" (accessed June 2013).

Race

For many people, it comes as a surprise that racial categorization schemes were invented by scientists to support worldviews that viewed some groups of people as superior and some as inferior. There are three important concepts linked to this fact:

1. Race is a made-up social construct, and not an actual biological fact.
2. Race designations have changed over time. Some groups that are considered "white" in the United States today were considered "non-white" in previous eras, in U.S. Census data and in mass media and popular culture (for example, Irish, Italian, and Jewish people).
3. The way in which racial categorizations are enforced (the shape of racism) has also changed over time. For example, the racial designation of Asian American and Pacific Islander changed four times in the 19th century. That is, they were defined at times as white and at other times as not white. Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, as designated groups, have been used by whites at different times in history to compete with African American labor.

SOURCE:

1. PBS, "Race: The Power of an Illusion" (2018–2019 relaunch of 2003 series).
2. Paul Kivel, *Uprooting Racism: How White People Can Work for Racial Justice* (Gabriola Island, British Columbia: New Society Publishers, 2002), page 141.

Related Resources: Race, Ethnicity, and Indigeneity (scroll down alphabetically to the box for "**Race**")

Racial and Ethnic Identity

An individual's awareness and experience of being a member of a racial and ethnic group; the racial and ethnic categories that an individual chooses to describe him or herself based on such factors as biological heritage, physical appearance, cultural affiliation, early socialization, and personal experience.

SOURCE: *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook*, edited by Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell, and Pat Griffin, Routledge, 1997.

Related Resources: Race, Ethnicity, and Indigeneity (includes "**Resources by Specific Racial/Ethnic Groups**")

Racial Equity

1. Racial equity is the condition that would be achieved if one's racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares. When we use the term, we are

thinking about racial equity as one part of racial justice, and thus we also include work to address root causes of inequities, not just their manifestation. This includes elimination of policies, practices, attitudes, and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race or that fail to eliminate them.

2. "A mindset and method for solving problems that have endured for generations, seem intractable, harm people and communities of color most acutely, and ultimately affect people of all races. This will require seeing differently, thinking differently, and doing the work differently. Racial equity is about results that make a difference and last."

SOURCE:

1. Center for Assessment and Policy Development.
2. OpenSource Leadership Strategies.

Related Resources: Racial Equity

Racial Identity Development Theory

Racial Identity Development Theory discusses how people in various racial groups and with multiracial identities form their particular self-concept. It also describes some typical phases in remaking that identity based on learning and awareness of systems of privilege and structural racism, cultural, and historical meanings attached to racial categories, and factors operating in the larger socio-historical level (e.g. globalization, technology, immigration, and increasing multiracial population).

SOURCE: *New Perspectives on Racial Identity Development: Integrating Emerging Frameworks*, edited by Charmaine L. Wijeyesinghe and Bailey W. Jackson (NYU Press, 2012).

Related Resources: Theory (scroll down alphabetically to the box for "**Racial Identity Development Theory**")

Racial Inequity

Racial inequity is when two or more racial groups are not standing on approximately equal footing, such as the percentages of each ethnic group in terms of dropout rates, single family home ownership, access to healthcare, etc.

SOURCE: Ibram X. Kendi, *How To Be An Antiracist*, Random House, 2019.

Racial Justice

1. The systematic fair treatment of people of all races, resulting in equitable opportunities and outcomes for all. Racial justice—or racial equity—goes beyond "anti-racism." It is not just the absence of discrimination and inequities, but also the presence of deliberate systems and supports to achieve and sustain racial equity through proactive and preventative measures.
2. Operationalizing racial justice means reimagining and co-creating a just and liberated world and includes:
    ● understanding the history of racism and the system of white supremacy and addressing past harms,
    ● working in right relationship and accountability in an ecosystem (an issue, sector, or community ecosystem) for collective change,
    ● implementing interventions that use an intersectional analysis and that impact multiple systems,
    ● centering Blackness and building community, cultural, economic, and political power of Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color (BIPOC), and
    ● applying the practice of love along with disruption and resistance to the status quo.

SOURCE:

1. Race Forward, "Race Reporting Guide" (2015).
2. Maggie Potapchuk, "Operationalizing Racial Justice in Non-Profit Organizations" (MP Associates, 2020). This definition is based on and expanded from the one described in Rinku Sen and Lori Villarosa, "Grantmaking with a Racial Justice Lens: A Practical Guide" (Philanthropic Initiative for Racial Equity, 2019).

Racial Reconciliation

Reconciliation involves three ideas. First, it recognizes that racism in America is both systemic and institutionalized, with far–reaching effects on both political engagement and economic opportunities for minorities. Second, reconciliation is engendered by empowering local communities through relationship-building and truth-telling. Lastly, justice is the essential component of the conciliatory process—justice that is best termed as restorative rather than retributive, while still maintaining its vital punitive character.

SOURCE: The William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation, Position Statement on Reconciliation (2014).

Related Resources: Racial Reconciliation

Racial Resentment

Defined as the convergence of anti-black sentiments with traditional American views on effort, hard work and individualism. People who express affirmative beliefs like this: "Irish, Italian, Jewish and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Blacks should do the same without any special favors," and or disagree with beliefs like this: "Generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for Blacks to work their way out of the lower class," express high racial resentment.

SOURCE: *This definition was found on the White Noise Collective webpage "Shared Understandings"* **with this source note:** Definitions, quotes and examples compiled from many sources, including Andrea Ayvazian, Andrea Smith, Black Girl Dangerous, Class Action, Kathryn Mathers, Dr. Wade Nobles, Peggy McIntosh, *Love, Race and Liberation*, Barbara Love, OpenSource Leadership, Racial Equity Tools, Robin DiAngelo, Colors of Resistance, *Challenging White Supremacy*, Isaac Giron, Anne Braden, Wikipedia, and Barbara Major, & *People's Institute for Survival and Beyond*.

Racialization

Racialization is the very complex and contradictory process through which groups come to be designated as being of a particular "race" and on that basis subjected to differential and/or unequal treatment. Put simply, "racialization [is] the process of manufacturing and utilizing the notion of race in any capacity." While white people are also racialized, this process is often rendered invisible or normative to those designated as white. As a result, white people may not see themselves as part of a race but still maintain the authority to name and racialize "others."

SOURCE: Alberta Civil Liberties Research Centre, "Racialization" (2018) / Calgary Anti-Racism Education, "CARED Glossary" (2020).

Racism

Racism = race prejudice + social and institutional power
Racism = a system of advantage based on race
Racism = a system of oppression based on race
Racism = a white supremacy system

Racism is different from racial prejudice, hatred, or discrimination. Racism involves one group having the power to carry out systematic discrimination through the institutional policies and practices of the society and by shaping the cultural beliefs and values that support those racist policies and practices.

SOURCE: "What Is Racism?" – Dismantling Racism Works (dRworks) web workbook.

Related Resources: [Racism](#)

Racist

One who is supporting a racist policy through their actions or interaction or expressing a racist idea.

SOURCE: Ibram X. Kendi, *How To Be An Antiracist*, Random House, 2019.

Racist Ideas

A racist idea is any idea that suggests one racial group is inferior or superior to another racial group in any way.

SOURCE: Ibram X. Kendi, *How To Be An Antiracist*, Random House, 2019.

Racist Policies

A racist policy is any measure that produces or sustains racial inequity between or among racial groups. Policies are written and unwritten laws, rules, procedures, processes, regulations, and guidelines that govern people. There is no such thing as a nonracist or race-neutral policy. Every policy in every institution in every community in every nation is producing or sustaining either racial inequity or equity between racial groups. Racist policies are also expressed through other terms such as "structural racism" or "systemic racism". Racism itself is institutional, structural, and systemic.

SOURCE: Ibram X. Kendi, *How To Be An Antiracist*, Random House, 2019.

Related Resources: [Laws and Policies](#)

Religious Oppression

The systematic subordination of minority religious groups, such as Buddhists, Hindus, Jews, Muslims, Sikhs, Native American spiritualities, and those who are atheists, agnostics, or freethinkers. The subordination of non-Christian religions occurs at all levels of society through the actions of individuals (religious prejudice), institutional policies and practices (religious discrimination), and cultural and societal norms and values associated with Christianity. *[This definition refers to religious oppression in the United States.]*

SOURCE: *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook*, edited by Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell, with Diane J. Goodman and Khyati Y. Joshi (Routledge, 2016), p. 255.

Reparations

States have a legal duty to acknowledge and address widespread or systematic human rights violations, in cases where the state caused the violations or did not seriously try to prevent them. Reparations initiatives seek to address the harms caused by these violations. They can take the form of compensating for the losses suffered, which helps overcome some of the consequences of abuse. They can also be future oriented—providing rehabilitation and a better life to victims—and help to change the underlying causes of abuse. Reparations publicly affirm that victims are rights-holders entitled to redress.

SOURCE: International Center for Transitional Justice.

Related Resources: Reparations

Restorative Justice

Restorative Justice is a theory of justice that emphasizes repairing the harm caused by crime and conflict. It places decisions in the hands of those who have been most affected by a wrongdoing, and gives equal concern to the victim, the offender, and the surrounding community. Restorative responses are meant to repair harm, heal broken relationships, and address the underlying reasons for the offense. Restorative Justice emphasizes individual and collective accountability. Crime and conflict generate opportunities to build community and increase grassroots power when restorative practices are employed.

SOURCE: The Movement for Black Lives (M4BL), "Glossary."

Related Resources: Conflict Transformation and Restorative Justice

Settler Colonialism

Settler colonialism refers to colonization in which colonizing powers create permanent or long-term settlement on land owned and/or occupied by other peoples, often by force. This contrasts with colonialism where colonizer's focus only on extracting resources back to their countries of origin, for example. Settler Colonialism typically includes oppressive governance, dismantling of indigenous cultural forms, and enforcement of codes of superiority (such as white supremacy). Examples include white European occupations of land in what is now the United States, Spain's settlements throughout Latin America, and the Apartheid government established by White Europeans in South Africa.

Per Dina Gillio-Whitaker, "Settler Colonialism may be said to be a structure, not an historic event, whose endgame is always the elimination of the Natives in order to acquire their land, which it does in countless seen and unseen ways. These techniques are woven throughout the US's national discourse at all levels of society. Manifest Destiny—that is, the US's divinely sanctioned inevitability—is like a computer program always operating unnoticeably

in the background. In this program, genocide and land dispossession are continually both justified and denied."

SOURCE: Dina Gilio-Whitaker, "[Settler Fragility: Why Settler Privilege Is So Hard to Talk About](#)" (2018).

Related Resources: [Diaspora and Colonization](#) (scroll down alphabetically to the box for "**Neo-Colonialism and Settler Colonialism**")

Sexual Orientation

The sexual attraction toward other people or no people. While sexual activity involves the choices one makes regarding behavior, one's sexual activity does not define one's sexual orientation. Sexual orientation is part of the human condition, and all people have one. Typically, it is attraction that helps determine orientation.

SOURCE: [PFLAG National Glossary of Terms](#), June 2022 (accessed July 2022).

Social Oppression

Refers to oppression that is achieved through social means and that is social in scope—it affects whole categories of people. This kind of oppression includes the systematic mistreatment, exploitation, and abuse of a group (or groups) of people by another group (or groups). It occurs whenever one group holds power over another in society through the control of social institutions, along with society's laws, customs, and norms. The outcome of social oppression is that groups in society are sorted into different positions within the social hierarchies of race, class, gender, sexuality, and ability. Those in the controlling, or dominant group, benefit from the oppression of other groups through heightened privileges relative to others, greater access to rights and resources, a better quality of life, and overall greater life chances. Those who experience the brunt of oppression have fewer rights, less access to resources, less political power, lower economic potential, worse health and higher mortality rates, and lower overall life chances.

SOURCE: Canadian Race Relations Foundation, [Glossary of Terms](#).

Socialization

The process of consciously and unconsciously learning norms, beliefs, and practices from individuals, media, and institutions about who does/does not have power and privilege as it relates to social identities and how the self is positioned in relationship to these identities. "How we are supposed to act."

SOURCE: *This definition was found on the White Noise Collective webpage "[Shared Understandings](#)"* **with this source note:** Definitions, quotes and examples compiled from many sources, including Andrea Ayvazian, Andrea Smith, Black Girl Dangerous, Class Action, Kathryn Mathers, Dr. Wade Nobles, Peggy McIntosh, *Love, Race and Liberation*, Barbara Love, OpenSource Leadership, Racial Equity Tools, Robin DiAngelo, Colors of Resistance, *Challenging White Supremacy*, Isaac Giron, Anne Braden, Wikipedia, and Barbara Major, & *People's Institute for Survival and Beyond*.

Structural Racialization

Structural racialization connotes the dynamic process that creates cumulative and durable inequalities based on race. Interactions between individuals are shaped by and reflect underlying and often hidden structures that shape biases and create disparate outcomes even in the absence of racist actors or racist intentions. The presence of structural racialization is evidenced by consistent differences in outcomes in education attainment, family wealth, and even life span.

SOURCE: [Systems Thinking and Race: Workshop Summary](#) by john a. powell, Connie Cagampang Heller, and Fayza Bundalli (The California Endowment, 2011).

Related Resources: [Structural Racism](#)

Structural Racism

1. The normalization and legitimization of an array of dynamics – historical, cultural, institutional, and interpersonal – that routinely advantage Whites while producing cumulative and chronic adverse outcomes for people of color. Structural racism encompasses the entire system of White domination, diffused and infused in all aspects of society including its history, culture, politics, economics, and entire social fabric. Structural racism is more difficult to locate in a particular institution because it involves the reinforcing effects of multiple institutions and cultural norms, past and present, continually reproducing old and producing new forms of racism. Structural racism is the most profound and pervasive form of racism – all other forms of racism emerge from structural racism.

2. For example, we can see structural racism in the many institutional, cultural, and structural factors that contribute to lower life expectancy for African American and Native American men, compared to white men. These include higher exposure to environmental toxins, dangerous jobs and unhealthy housing stock, higher exposure to and more lethal consequences for reacting to violence, stress, and racism, lower

rates of health care coverage, access, and quality of care, and systematic refusal by the nation to fix these things.

SOURCE:

1. *Chronic Disparity: Strong and Pervasive Evidence of Racial Inequalities* by Keith Lawrence, Aspen Institute on Community Change, and Terry Keleher, Applied Research Center, for the Race and Public Policy Conference (2004).
2. *Flipping the Script: White Privilege and Community Building* by Maggie Potapchuk, Sally Leiderman, Donna Bivens, and Barbara Major (2005).

Related Resources: Structural Racism

Systemic Racism

1. This is an interlocking and reciprocal relationship between the individual, institutional and structural levels which function as a system of racism. These various levels of racism operate together in a lockstep model and function together as a whole system. These levels are:
   - Individual (within interactions between people)
   - Institutional (within institutions and systems of power)
   - Structural or societal (among institutions and across society)
2. In many ways "systemic racism" and "structural racism" are synonymous. If there is a difference between the terms, it can be said to exist in the fact that a structural racism analysis pays more attention to the historical, cultural, and social psychological aspects of our currently racialized society.

SOURCE:

1. Canadian Race Relations Foundation, Glossary of Terms.
2. Aspen Institute, "11 Terms You Should Know to Better Understand Structural Racism" (2016).

Tokenism

Tokenism is, simply, covert racism. Racism requires those in power to maintain their privilege by exercising social, economic, and/or political muscle against people of color (POC). Tokenism achieves the same while giving those in power the appearance of being non-racist and even champions of diversity because they recruit and use POC as racialized props. Examples include:

- Recruit POC to formal leadership positions, but keep all the power.

- Only hire POC for POC "stuff."
- Convene Special "Diversity Councils" but don't build POC leadership on your main Board.
- Use POC as your mouthpiece and shield against other POC.

SOURCE: Helen Kim Ho, "8 Ways People of Color are Tokenized in Nonprofits," The Nonprofit Revolution (2017).

Transformative Justice (TJ)

A political framework and approach for responding to violence, harm, and abuse. At its most basic, it seeks to respond to violence without creating more violence and/or engaging in harm reduction to lessen the violence. TJ can be thought of as a way of "making things right," getting in "right relation," or creating justice together. Transformative justice responses and interventions 1) do not rely on the state (e.g. police, prisons, the criminal legal system, I.C.E., foster care system (though some TJ responses do rely on or incorporate social services like counseling)); 2) do not reinforce or perpetuate violence such as oppressive norms or vigilantism; and most importantly, 3) actively cultivate the things we know prevent violence such as healing, accountability, resilience, and safety for all involved.

SOURCE: Mia Mingus (accessed July 2022).

Transgender

Often shortened to trans, from the Latin prefix for "on a different side as." A term describing a person's gender identity that does not necessarily match their assigned sex at birth. Transgender people may or may not decide to alter their bodies hormonally and/or surgically to match their gender identity. This word is also used as an umbrella term to describe groups of people who transcend conventional expectations of gender identity or expression—such groups include, but are not limited to, people who identify as transsexual, genderqueer, gender variant, gender diverse, and androgynous. "Trans" is often considered more inclusive than transgender because it includes transgender, transsexual, transmasc, transfem, and those who simply use the word trans.

SOURCE: PFLAG National Glossary of Terms, June 2022 (accessed July 2022).

Two Spirit

1. The term Two Spirit has been present in Native communities for countless generations that predate LGBTQ terminology. For generations, Two Spirit Native culture went underground to avoid detection and persecution. While the term Two

Spirit was coined in 1990 in Winnipeg, Canada, as a means of unifying various gender identities and expressions of Native American/First Nations/Indigenous individuals, the term is not a specific definition of gender, sexual orientation, or other self-determining catch-all phrase, but rather an umbrella term. Two Spirit people have both a male and female spirit within them and are blessed by their Creator to see life through the eyes of both genders.

2.   Two-Spirit is an umbrella pan-Native American term. It describes gender identity, gender expression, and/or sexual orientation. Some Two-Spirits may align with colonial LGBTQ+ identities while others may not. However, keep in mind that Two-Spirit is not for non-Native people. You can't appropriate our culture because our identities as Two-Spirits on Turtle Island have always been.

SOURCE:

1. Tony Enos, "8 Things You Should Know About Two Spirit People," *Indian Country Today*, Sept 13, 2018.
2. Two-Spirit Program: Niizhojichaagwijig Niganawenimaanaanig Ezhichigewin, Native Justice Coalition (accessed July 2022).

White Fragility

A state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable [for white people], triggering a range of defensive moves. These moves include the outward display of emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and behaviors such as argumentation, silence, and leaving the stress-inducing situation. These behaviors, in turn, function to reinstate white racial equilibrium.

SOURCE: Robin DiAngelo, "White Fragility" (*International Journal of Critical Pedagogy*, 2011).

Related Resources: System of White Supremacy and White Privilege

White Privilege

1. Refers to the unquestioned and unearned set of advantages, entitlements, benefits and choices bestowed on people solely because they are white. Generally white people who experience such privilege do so without being conscious of it.
2. *Structural White Privilege*: A system of white domination that creates and maintains belief systems that make current racial advantages and disadvantages seem normal. The system includes powerful incentives for maintaining white privilege and its consequences, and powerful negative consequences for trying to interrupt white

privilege or reduce its consequences in meaningful ways. The system includes internal and external manifestations at the individual, interpersonal, cultural and institutional levels.

The accumulated and interrelated advantages and disadvantages of white privilege that are reflected in racial/ethnic inequities in life-expectancy and other health outcomes, income and wealth, and other outcomes, in part through different access to opportunities and resources. These differences are maintained in part by denying that these advantages and disadvantages exist at the structural, institutional, cultural, interpersonal, and individual levels and by refusing to redress them or eliminate the systems, policies, practices, cultural norms, and other behaviors and assumptions that maintain them.

Interpersonal White Privilege: Behavior between people that consciously or unconsciously reflects white superiority or entitlement.

Cultural White Privilege: A set of dominant cultural assumptions about what is good, normal or appropriate that reflects Western European white world views and dismisses or demonizes other world views.

Institutional White Privilege: Policies, practices and behaviors of institutions—such as schools, banks, non-profits or the Supreme Court—that have the effect of maintaining or increasing accumulated advantages for those groups currently defined as white, and maintaining or increasing disadvantages for those racial or ethnic groups not defined as white. The ability of institutions to survive and thrive even when their policies, practices and behaviors maintain, expand or fail to redress accumulated disadvantages and/or inequitable outcomes for people of color.

SOURCE:

1. Peggy McIntosh, "White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences Through Work in Women Studies" (1988).
2. Transforming White Privilege: A 21st Century Leadership Capacity, CAPD, MP Associates, World Trust Educational Services (2012).

Related Resources: System of White Supremacy and White Privilege

White Supremacy

The idea (ideology) that white people and the ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions of white people are superior to People of Color and their ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions. While most people associate white supremacy with extremist groups like the Ku Klux Klan and the

neo-Nazis, white supremacy is ever present in our institutional and cultural assumptions that assign value, morality, goodness, and humanity to the white group while casting people and communities of color as worthless (worth less), immoral, bad, and inhuman and "undeserving." Drawing from critical race theory, the term "white supremacy" also refers to a political or socio-economic system where white people enjoy structural advantage and rights that other racial and ethnic groups do not, both at a collective and an individual level.

SOURCE: "What Is Racism?" – Dismantling Racism Works (dRworks) web workbook.

Related Resources: System of White Supremacy and White Privilege and Addressing Hate and White Supremacy

White Supremacy Culture

1. White Supremacy Culture refers to the dominant, unquestioned standards of behavior and ways of functioning embodied by the vast majority of institutions in the United States. These standards may be seen as mainstream, dominant cultural practices; they have evolved from the United States' history of white supremacy. Because it is so normalized it can be hard to see, which only adds to its powerful hold. In many ways, it is indistinguishable from what we might call U.S. culture or norms – a focus on individuals over groups, for example, or an emphasis on the written word as a form of professional communication. But it operates in even more subtle ways, by actually defining what "normal" is – and likewise, what "professional," "effective," or even "good" is. In turn, white culture also defines what is not good, "at risk," or "unsustainable." White culture values some ways of thinking, behaving, deciding, and knowing – ways that are more familiar and come more naturally to those from a white, western tradition – while devaluing or rendering invisible other ways. And it does this without ever having to explicitly say so...
2. An artificial, historically constructed culture which expresses, justifies, and binds together the United States white supremacy system. It is the glue that binds together white-controlled institutions into systems and white-controlled systems into the global white supremacy system.

SOURCE:

1. Gita Gulati-Partee and Maggie Potapchuk, "Paying Attention to White Culture and Privilege: A Missing Link to Advancing Racial Equity" (*The Foundation Review* vol. 6: issue 1, 2014).
2. Sharon Martinas and the Challenging White Supremacy Workshop, 4th revision (1995).

Related Resources: [Organizational Change Process](#) (see the first section: "**Addressing White Dominant Culture**")

Whiteness

1. The term white, referring to people, was created by Virginia slave owners and colonial rules in the 17th century. It replaced terms like Christian and Englishman to distinguish European colonists from Africans and indigenous peoples. European colonial powers established whiteness as a legal concept after Bacon's Rebellion in 1676, during which indentured servants of European and African descent had united against the colonial elite. The legal distinction of white separated the servant class on the basis of skin color and continental origin. The creation of 'whiteness' meant giving privileges to some, while denying them to others with the justification of biological and social inferiority.
2. Whiteness itself refers to the specific dimensions of racism that serve to elevate white people over people of color. This definition counters the dominant representation of racism in mainstream education as isolated in discrete behaviors that some individuals may or may not demonstrate, and goes beyond naming specific privileges (McIntosh, 1988). Whites are theorized as actively shaped, affected, defined, and elevated through their racialization and the individual and collective consciousness formed within it … Whiteness is thus conceptualized as a constellation of processes and practices rather than as a discrete entity (i.e. skin color alone). Whiteness is dynamic, relational, and operating at all times and on myriad levels. These processes and practices include basic rights, values, beliefs, perspectives, and experiences purported to be commonly shared by all but which are actually only consistently afforded to white people.

SOURCE:

1. PBS, "[Race: The Power of an Illusion](#)" (2018–2019 relaunch of [2003 series](#)).
2. Robin DiAngelo, "[White Fragility](#)" (*International Journal of Critical Pedagogy*, 2011).

Related Resources: [System of White Supremacy and White Privilege](#)

Xenophobia

Any attitude, behavior, practice, or policy that explicitly or implicitly reflects the belief that immigrants are inferior to the dominant group of people. Xenophobia is reflected in interpersonal, institutional, and systemic levels oppression and is a function of White supremacy.

SOURCE: Lee Cokorinos, "The Racist Roots of the Anti-Immigration Movement," The Black Agenda Report (2007).

Youth Oppression

Systematic subordination and mistreatment of young people and elders based on age through the restriction and denial of opportunities to exercise social, economic, and political power. Youth and elder oppressions both include restricted access to goods, services, and privileges of society, along with loss of voice and limited access to participation in society. The subordination of young people and elders is supported by institutional structures and practices of society, networks of laws, rules, policies, and procedures, along with the attitudes, values, and actions of individuals that combine to ensure the subordinated status of members of these socially constructed identity groups. Young people and elders are marginalized and excluded by practices that give middle-aged adults the power to act on and for them, often without their agreement or consent. (See also **Elder Oppression**.)

SOURCE: *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook*, edited by Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell, with Diane J. Goodman and Khyati Y. Joshi (Routledge, 2016), p. 342.

Documents Reviewed

- 2007 Org Assessment
- The 2019-2021 Affirmative Action Plan
- The 2020 DEQ Performance Review Process Training for Managers
- DEQ's Detailed Organization Chart
- DAS Enterprise Values & Competencies Competency Guide
- The DEI Council Charter
- The Washington Department of Ecology Strategic Plan
- The 8/4/2021 Message from DEQ's BIPOC Affinity Group
- The Collective Bargaining Agreement between AFSCME Department of Environmental Quality and Management (2021 - 2023)
- The Berry Dunn Environmental Scan, Strategic Planning Approach, and Strategic Planning Steering Committee documents
- Email communications to all staff over the past year
- Natalie's "Foundational Challenges of the DEI Coordinator Role" Document
- Anti-Racism and DEI at DEQ Presentation: DEQ Recruitment and Retention Project
- Inter-Affinity Employee Experience Survey